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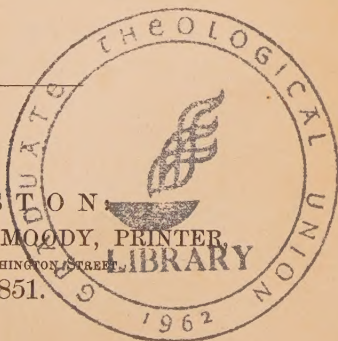


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A
DISCOURSE
ON
THE OFFICIAL CHARACTER
OF
NATHANAEL EMMONS:

BY
THOMAS WILLIAMS.
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

BOSTON,
CHARLES C. P. MOODY, PRINTER,
No. 52 WASHINGTON STREET,
1851.



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DISCOURSE.

AND MOREOVER, BECAUSE THE PREACHER WAS WISE, HE STILL TAUGHT THE PEOPLE KNOWLEDGE. — *Ecclesiastes*, 12: 9.

THAT portion of the Scriptures, which is called *Ecclesiastes*, was written by Solomon. For it is entitled, *The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem*. In this discourse, the royal preacher has a definite and important object, which is to teach and show the duty of man. In the accomplishment of this object, he exhibits a perfect example of proper instruction. In the text, which respects himself, he declares what a wise preacher will do: he declares the end, which ought to be pursued; and the means, which ought to be used, by the preachers of divine truth. This end is the religious improvement of their people in divine knowledge. The means, which they ought to use for this end, is the constant instruction of their people.

The words of our text, then, place before us the following doctrine: A wise preacher will constantly teach his people knowledge.

To illustrate this doctrine, it is proposed,

I. To show what all people need to be taught ;

II. To show what a preacher needs, that he may teach his people ;

III. To show why a wise preacher will constantly teach his people knowledge. It is proposed,

I. To show what all people need to be taught.

Every people needs to be taught the same system of divine truth. Of divine truth, there is but one system. The truth, on the same subjects, is consistent and permanent. Divine truth is suited to every people ; and it is needed by every person. As there is but one system of divine truth, every people needs to be taught the same divine instructions. It is easy, then, to perceive what every people needs to be taught. For the only correct system of religious instruction is founded on the truth respecting God and man. The truth, in respect to God and man, includes the doctrines and duties of religion. It teaches and shows what every people and every person ought to believe and to do.

1. Every people needs to be taught the true knowledge of God.

The divine existence is certain and evident, from the nature of mutable and dependent beings, that are not eternal, but are caused to

exist ; and are preserved and governed by an intelligent and almighty Creator. This being is JEHOVAH. The properties of his nature and the perfections of his character are as evident, as his existence. His obligations and affections, his purposes and offices, his exertions and enjoyments, agree with his nature and perfections. His greatness and goodness, which are manifested by his designs, his works and his word, require and bind his rational creatures to esteem, love and serve Him, with supreme and constant affection and delight. But the purposes and conduct of God, respecting mankind, afford peculiar reasons, for which they should regard him with peculiar affection and interest. Yet, their sentiments, affections and actions towards God will not agree with his designs and conduct towards themselves, without divine knowledge. No human being ever has this knowledge without instruction ; nor without instruction, either directly or indirectly, from teachers whom God appoints, that he may preserve on earth the knowledge of his name. But a people, who are not taught the knowledge of God, will not have the true knowledge of any being, or of any event. For “of him and through him and to him are all things.” If a people are not to be left by their teacher in total darkness, they are to be taught

by him the knowledge of God. This knowledge they need, as constantly as they need to think, feel, speak and act. For, in their thoughts, feelings, words and actions, they are bound to have a supreme and constant regard to God. But, with whatever constancy they may be taught the knowledge of God, they will learn only a small part of what it is important and desirable to know. Nor without instruction will they retain what they have been taught, or practice what they retain. Surely every people needs to be constantly taught the true knowledge of God.

2. Every people needs to be taught the true knowledge of man.

This branch of knowledge is connected with the knowledge of God. It is highly important for every people and every person to be taught the true knowledge of man. Without this knowledge, no one can perceive and perform what is necessary to his duty and safety, his honor and happiness. Human beings are the most important creatures, that ever can exist, on account of the nature and object of their existence. By the conduct of God towards mankind, he intends, most perfectly, to manifest his natural perfections; to exercise and gratify his moral goodness; and to produce the greatest and best effects respecting other beings, as well

as himself. If a people needs to be acquainted with subjects of the highest interest, they need to be taught the knowledge of man. This knowledge they will not obtain and possess, without instruction; nor without instruction by the teachers and preachers of divine truth; nor without their constant instruction. Every people needs to be taught the true knowledge of man, as well as the true knowledge of God.

II. It is proposed to show what a preacher needs, that he may constantly teach his people knowledge.

Knowledge, goodness and wisdom are necessary for a person to conduct himself with propriety, in any station or office, relation or employment. Every preacher is required to have some degree of true knowledge, goodness and wisdom, before he takes the charge of a people and enters on the difficult and laborious office of a publick teacher and preacher of the Gospel. It is now to be shown what a preacher needs, when he receives such a charge, for the performance of his duty.

1. That a preacher may teach his people, he must make constant progress in knowledge. However prosperous may be the moral state of a people and whatever may be their intellectual and spiritual attainments, they will need to be

taught the instructions of divine truth. A people, who have been well taught, will come to their teacher with demands for increased instruction. If a people be untaught, it will require more knowledge to instruct their minds, than if they had been well taught. When a people, who have been untaught, begin to learn divine truth, their demands for instruction will be constant and urgent. A preacher, who begins to teach his people, must still teach his people knowledge, if he would meet the views and feelings of saints or sinners, of the friends or foes of divine truth. The friends of truth will demand instruction, that they may maintain and defend what they have learnt and what they love. The foes of truth will oblige a preacher, by their objections, to advance in his instructions; or to retreat and renounce every doctrine and duty he has ever taught. Neither a well-taught nor an untaught people, neither the friends nor the foes of truth, will allow a preacher to stop, decline, or retreat, in his instructions. If he does not advance, his failure will be to his own injury and disgrace and their intellectual and spiritual detriment.

Every degree of knowledge, which a people may obtain, will lay a foundation and produce a necessity for farther instruction. If a preacher

does not advance in knowledge, he will be unable to meet the growing demands of his people. As their demands increase, his ability for their instruction will decline. A painful consciousness of his increasing inability to teach his people, will destroy his confidence, enfeeble his exertions and unfit him for every duty. If a preacher does not advance in divine knowledge, he will decline. If he declines, he will be obliged to retreat, until he has deserted the path of duty and entered the broad way of error and deceit. Declension in preachers destroys their ability, reputation and influence; and is fatal to the religious improvement and prosperity of their people. No preacher can constantly teach any people, without constant progress in knowledge. Nor will a people be profited and gratified by a preacher, when he does not bring, from his treasure, things new, as well as old. But no preacher can bring such things from his treasure, unless they be first brought into it, by his own progress in divine knowledge. If a preacher would constantly teach his people, he must make constant progress in the knowledge of divine truth.

2. That a preacher may teach his people, he must make constant progress in goodness. Without goodness, no person will make any progress

in true knowledge. Besides the influence of goodness on advancement in knowledge, powerful motives require a preacher to advance in goodness. Without holy affections, he will do nothing to any good effect in the instruction of his people. Their demands on his goodness will be as great, as their demands on his knowledge. If he does not grow in grace, he will not meet the demands of his people, for the exercise of holy affections. When a preacher has once placed himself before his people in the spirit of goodness, he must always stand and advance in this spirit. He must never retreat, nor decline. If he depart from this spirit, he will dishearten the friends of God ; and he will be pursued by his foes, until he is driven from the practice of holiness. But the more a preacher advances in holiness, the more he will be opposed by his enemies. If he does not arise in goodness, above every enemy and every form and degree and exertion of opposition, he will be overcome. A preacher must set no bounds to his progress in goodness, nor indulge any declension in holiness. The state and conduct of his people, with his duties and trials, will require continued and increased exercises and expressions of goodness. That a preacher may be able and willing to teach his people, he must attain

and express every grace and virtue of the Holy Spirit. Without these graces and virtues, in continual advancement, he will be unfit for the increased exercise of holiness. The greater the degree of grace and virtue, which a preacher has shown, the more important is his progress in holiness; or he will fall below himself. If he so falls, he will sink under the burdens, that will be rolled upon him; and he will be unable to arise and stand for the instruction of his people. A preacher must constantly advance in goodness, in order to teach his people that knowledge, which they need to be taught.

3. For the proper instruction of his people, a preacher must make progress in wisdom. True wisdom cannot exist, without knowledge and goodness. But knowledge and goodness may exist, without wisdom. For wisdom consists in the proper use of knowledge and goodness. It unites knowledge and goodness, in the perception and pursuit of proper ends by proper means. However a preacher may need and may obtain knowledge and goodness, without wisdom he will not be prepared to teach his people. Without wisdom to perceive and pursue the best ends by the best means, he will make no good use of his knowledge, nor will he exercise his goodness to any important purpose. In

a preacher, wisdom is the principal thing, to which knowledge and goodness are subservient. Wisdom uses knowledge and directs goodness, with energy, safety and success. A preacher must be wise and advance in wisdom, if he would teach his people. The instruction of human beings, in divine knowledge, is an object of the highest importance and difficulty. With knowledge to perceive this object and with goodness to desire it, a preacher must have wisdom, or he will not attain the great and good object of his office. In proportion to the wisdom, which he, at any time, practices, will be the future trials of his wisdom and the necessity for advancement in this precious endowment. However wisely he may act at some times and for some objects, he must be still wiser, or he will lose what he has gained, destroy what he has done and unteach what he has taught. His progress in wisdom must be as constant and as great, as his progress in knowledge and goodness, or he will not still teach his people knowledge. Every word and deed of wisdom will lay a foundation and produce an occasion, for wiser words and wiser deeds. If a preacher would be the constant teacher of his people, he must be a constant learner; and make progress in knowledge, goodness and wisdom.

III. It is to be shown, why a preacher, who is wise, will constantly teach his people knowledge.

A wise preacher has knowledge to perceive, goodness to desire and wisdom to pursue the proper object of his profession. Though he has been chosen and called of God to the duties of his office, yet he has, understandingly and cordially, engaged to perform these duties. It is his desire and purpose to do what knowledge, goodness and wisdom require and bind him to do. And he has the best reasons and the strongest motives to induce and encourage him to instruct his people.

1. A wise preacher will still teach his people, from a true regard to his office. God has appointed and maintained the office of religious teachers. It is his design, by this office, to communicate the knowledge of divine truth. It is the duty of preachers to receive from God and teach and publish, in his name, the true knowledge of divine subjects. By their office they are obliged and authorized to preach the gospel, truly, fully and plainly, in the name of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. They are promised the instruction and assistance, which they may need for this service. Every wise preacher understands the design, the privilege and the obligation of his office. He not only understands these

things, but he chooses this office, assumes its bonds and subjects himself to the pains and woes of an unfaithful servant, if he does not perform his special duties. But a preacher does not perform those duties, nor regard his most sacred and solemn bonds, any farther than he teaches his hearers divine knowledge. From his entrance on the duties of a preacher, it is to be supposed, that a man prefers the Christian ministry, with its labors, burdens and trials, before any other employment, to which he might devote himself. He, who wisely chooses the office of a preacher, chooses it, not for his own sake; not for his ease, his honor, interest, or happiness; but for the office itself, on account of its importance and usefulness, its benevolence and self-denial. If such be his choice, it will be his object to sustain and magnify the design and dignity of his office, whatever he may be called, for the sake of it, to do, or to suffer. The nature and design of his office will so guard and guide a wise preacher, that he will be true and faithful to his sacred bonds. His own heart will fasten these bonds on himself, with increasing decision and firmness, until God, by his death, close his term of service and sorrow on earth. If a preacher does not teach his people knowledge, he must be sensible that he is faithless and false

to his office ; and must fall under the condemning sentence of his own conscience, as well as the displeasure and rebuke of his supreme Lord and Judge. It is impossible for a preacher to have a proper regard to his office ; and yet not employ his knowledge, goodness and wisdom for the instruction of his people.

. 2. A wise preacher will be induced, by a proper regard to his people, to give his hearers constant instruction. Such a preacher perceives, that his people immediately demand and deserve his affections and exertions. He understands their character and condition, their danger and duty. He sees and feels the importance of their present existence ; and the everlasting connections and consequences of their sentiments and actions, in this short term of trial. He knows that the spiritual and eternal interests of human beings are of more weight and worth, than the interests of any other creatures. He sees that every person must gain or lose, not his own salvation from eternal punishment and his own eternal happiness only ; but that he must gain or lose the possession and enjoyment of the glory and blessedness of God and of his holy and happy creatures. At the commencement of his ministry and through its whole progress, the eyes and heart of a wise preacher turn to his people, as

they now come before him; and as they will appear, at the final judgment and in the retributions of eternity. He knows he must stand with his people, in the judgment of the great day, to see each person, who is committed to his ministry, either loved or hated, either approved or condemned, either blessed or cursed, either raised to endless joy and glory in heaven, or cast into the endless torment and shame of hell. Such are the beings and objects, for which he must give an account; and on which he must meet the effects of his conduct for ever. The songs of heaven and the groans of hell sound in his ears and press on his heart; and vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy rise before his eyes, whenever he beholds his people in the light of divine truth. That his people may be saved is his heart's desire and prayer to God. But whatever he can desire for his people and more than he can desire, or than the mind of any creature can conceive, is suspended on one plain, simple, certain point, — which is, that they receive the gospel. What he is bound to do for his people is no less plain, simple and certain, — it is, to declare the whole counsel of God. What doctrine or duty, what promise or threatening, what blessing or curse, what reward or punishment, shall he not plainly and fully teach and show his hearers, that they

may receive and enjoy the salvation of the gospel with eternal glory? How can he shun to declare the whole counsel of God? His powers and affections will be moved for his people, that he may, by any means and by all means, be a savour of life unto life to their souls. He will not only employ his present knowledge, goodness and wisdom for their instruction, but he will study and labor to advance in these attainments, that he may still teach his people knowledge.

3. A wise preacher will teach his people, from a proper regard to the church of God. This object employed the attention and engaged the affections of God in eternity. For this object the Holy Three in One formed the covenant of redemption. For the redemption of his people, God created all things; and, to accomplish their redemption, he preserves and governs all things, from the morning of the creation until the final judgment. For his people, God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, was manifest in the flesh; and, having made an atonement for their offences on the cross, he gives the Holy Spirit for their sanctification. The Holy Spirit sanctifies his people, through the truth, by the ministry of the gospel. It is from a special regard to his church, that God employs the preachers of the gospel, for their instruction and salvation. What God

regards in their appointment, wise preachers regard in the duties of their office. The redemption of his people is the object of God, in the appointment of religious teachers. By divine truth God awakens the attention, enlightens the conscience, humbles the spirit and saves the souls of his people. By the truth they are kept from the evil that is in the world, strengthened and comforted in their trials and sorrows, beautified and prepared to be with the Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven. The preachers of divine truth are the principal and official servants of God, in the preparation of his people for the mansions of purity and blessedness. When God shall have perfected their redemption, they will be the most lovely and happy creatures that can exist; and they will form a society of such glory and beauty, as shall for ever satisfy his infinite benevolence. Well may the preachers of the gospel give themselves wholly to the service of the church. Of created beings, the children of God demand and deserve the first place in their affections and exertions. Paul says, "I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." Wise preachers know their affections and exertions, for the church of God, shall suffer no real disappointment. For it is written, "We know

that all things work together for good to them that love God ; to them, who are the called according to his purpose." In the certain redemption and the eternal holiness and happiness of the chosen people of God, the wise preacher sees and enjoys the great object of his cares, labors and sorrows. He enjoys an assurance of the highest success, in the accomplishment of the divine purpose respecting the salvation of sinners. This purpose, with its great and happy effects, is the life and strength, the glory and joy of every wise preacher. A proper regard to the church, which agrees with the purpose of redemption, will induce wise preachers to employ their talents and engage their affections for the instruction of their people in divine knowledge.

4. From a proper regard to God, a wise preacher will constantly teach his people. However highly he may regard his office, however ardently he may love his people and however faithfully he may serve the church ; yet there is One Being, for whom he knows his office, his people and the church of God were designed, in eternity, to have an existence ; and to whom they must be entirely subservient. This Being is the only living and ever-living and true God. In view of God, other beings and objects are as nothing and vanity. The preacher, who is wise,

will have a supreme regard to God, in his sentiments, affections and actions. It will be his desire and purpose to teach and show the greatness and goodness, the glory and beauty, the holiness, happiness and absolute and immutable supremacy of Jehovah ; for whom all other beings and all things are designed and caused to have an existence. It is only by the light of divine truth, that God can be seen and known by his creatures. It is only by the constant instruction of his people, that a wise preacher can maintain and manifest that supreme regard to God, which fills his heart and governs his conduct. The more fully and clearly he places divine truth before his hearers, the more highly will he please, honor and exalt God. As a preacher advances in knowledge, goodness and wisdom, he will more constantly and intimately enjoy communion with the Father of his spirit, in the gospel of Jesus Christ. By this holy communion, he will “ be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge ; and be filled with all the fulness of God.” From the fulness of light, love and joy, which he receives from God, he will pour the waters of life upon his people, by their constant instruction in divine

knowledge. No one can stand, in the office of the Christian minister, with an honest and faithful spirit, without a supreme regard to God in heart, word and deed. Such regard to God will raise a preacher above every worldly object and every created being ; and it will carry him far beyond the past scenes of earth and time, that he may behold the glory of God, as he existed alone in eternity. With a supreme regard to God, a preacher must pass far beyond the future scenes of earth and time and the decisions of the final judgment, that he may dwell with God amidst the retributions of heaven and hell. There must he see the power and wrath of God, as they rise, with increasing vengeance and terror, on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. There too will he see the exceeding greatness of his mighty power and the exceeding riches of his grace, as they shall forever shine, with greater and greater brightness and beauty, in the vessels of mercy prepared unto glory. In the light of God, as he will manifest his holiness and sovereignty, in heaven and hell for ever, a wise preacher will burn and shine, in the duties of his office, with increasing knowledge, goodness and wisdom. By constant advancement in these gifts of the Divine Spirit, he will be prepared and disposed still to teach his people knowledge, from a

proper regard to his office, his people, the church of God and God himself.

IMPROVEMENT.

1. Since a wise preacher will teach his people knowledge, he will choose, for his sermons, the most instructive subjects. In the system of truth are certain and evident principles, which are the foundation of natural and revealed religion. The fundamental principles of divine truth exhibit the doctrines and duties of religion and all beings, objects and events, in their true nature and real importance ; and in their connections and relations. These principles are founded on the existence and nature of God ; and on the existence and nature of man. No preacher can teach his people the knowledge of any divine subject, or of any being, object, or event, until he is instructed and established in the fundamental and essential principles of theology. These principles will teach and show him the true knowledge of God and man. By this knowledge he will demonstrate the eternal existence of Jehovah, not merely from the evidence of design in his works ; but from the nature of mutable and dependent beings, which must have been caused to exist : for the nature of a creature

demonstrates the existence of the Creator. A wise preacher will demonstrate the properties of the divine nature, the natural perfections of the divine character and the moral perfection of God, in its various branches, with its connections and consequences. From the perfections of God, he will teach and show the eternity, immutability and universality of his decrees ; and their greatness and goodness, as they are accomplished in creation, providence and redemption. He will show his hearers, that God executes his decrees by his supreme agency ; that he produces and preserves all creatures and all things ; and causes and governs their motions, actions and affections ; and every event and circumstance, according to the counsel of his own will, by his own direct, positive and most glorious energy. The divine decrees and agency show the supreme object of God in his designs and works ; and his perfect holiness and happiness in the contemplation and accomplishment of this object. By the light of truth, as it shines in the divine decrees and conduct, a wise preacher will see, that his supreme object is the greatest, wisest and best, that is possible, or conceivable, or desirable, even with God himself. This object governs his affections and exertions ; and spreads light, love and joy around his throne in heaven ; and order, glory and beauty.

over the dark, hateful and dreadful objects and events, which exist on earth and in hell.

In view of God and his supreme object, a wise preacher can teach his people why God created the heavens and the earth, angels and men ; why he caused natural and moral evil to exist ; and why he continues their existence forever. By the same light he can see and show, why God formed the great and fearful purpose of redemption. In view of this purpose, the gospel of the Bible can be shown to be of divine origin, to be perfectly rational and to reach and govern, in its design and effects, every creature and every event. It can be shown, that the gospel reveals the only object and design, which can give glory and praise to God in heaven, or throw the least ray of light on this dark world and on the blackness of darkness, which shall forever exist in hell. In view of God, as he appears in the purpose of redemption, the teacher of divine truth can manifest the Lord Jesus Christ in his divine and human natures, in his most glorious and amiable personage, in his several offices and in his humiliation and exaltation. He can not only show his hearers, that Emmanuel is both God and man, in two distinct natures and one person for ever ; but why he became incarnate, why he lived on earth, died on the cross and arose from the grave ;

and why he now lives and reigns in heaven and has all power in heaven and on earth given unto him. He can also teach and prove the divinity and personality, the agency, office and work of the Holy Spirit, as they are revealed in the Scriptures; and as they appear in the instruction, sanctification and consolation of his people. Divine truth will teach wise preachers of the gospel the true doctrine of the Trinity; and will show, that the manner of the Divine Existence, as it is revealed in the Bible, is the foundation, which supports the purpose of redemption and also the whole system of Christianity. The scriptural doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation and fountain of the communion and blessedness, which will forever exist in heaven, between Jehovah and his redeemed and glorious family.

The fundamental principles of natural and revealed religion place the doctrines of human dependence and activity, of human depravity and obligation, of condemnation by the law and salvation by the gospel, of universal atonement and limited redemption, of justification by faith only and of reward for every holy affection and action, of regeneration and sanctification by the special and almighty agency of the Divine Spirit, of the repentance and conversion of sinners by their voluntary exercises in the reception of divine

truth, of eternal and personal election unto holiness and happiness, and eternal, personal and efficacious reprobation, of the resurrection and general judgment and of the final rejection and punishment of the wicked and the approbation and blessedness of the righteous, in such a light, that they can be seen and shown to be as rational, as they are scriptural ; and to be perfectly consistent with impartial, universal and disinterested benevolence ; and also with the holiness, justice, goodness, truth and grace of God. These doctrines and every other doctrine, in the system of divine truth, which is founded on what really exists in God and man, must stand, or fall, with the holiness and sovereignty of God, as they are manifest by his works ; with the manner of his existence, in three persons and one nature and essence, as it is revealed in his word ; and with his supreme object in his eternal purpose, which he accomplishes by his conduct towards mankind ; of whom he determined to form vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy ; that he might for ever show himself unto his creatures, in his greatness and goodness, with increasing majesty and beauty, in order to gratify his infinite and eternal benevolence, by the production of the greatest knowledge, holiness, usefulness, happiness,

glory, beauty and praise, that can exist in created beings.

The fundamental and essential doctrines of natural and revealed religion, with their connections and consequences, a wise preacher will study, teach, prove and apply, in such a manner, that he will still teach his people knowledge; and he will cause every hearer to see and know, “that of God and through him and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever.”

Nor will a wise preacher show less wisdom, in the choice of his subjects, when he teaches his people the knowledge of religious duties. That he may teach the knowledge of these duties, he will demonstrate the foundation of the obligation, which binds rational beings to be holy. This foundation exists in the nature of things; and it consists in the essential and immutable difference between moral good and evil. Holiness is, in its nature, supremely excellent and amiable; and worthy of the approbation and complacency of every rational being. — Wickedness is, in its nature, perfectly evil, hateful and guilty; and worthy of eternal condemnation and punishment. On these principles, a wise preacher will teach the perfection of the divine law, the duty of sinners to repent without any delay, to accept the punishment of their iniquity and to be re-

conciled to the character and government of God, independently of the promises and blessings of the gospel. Yet in view of the wisdom and power, the justice, grace and truth of God in the gospel, he will assume a louder and bolder tone, when he teaches and calls sinners to repent and turn to God and to live in obedience to his requirements. From the duty of sinners, he will show the essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; and that the peculiar character of the righteous consists in disinterested benevolence; and the peculiar character of the wicked, in their voluntary and malignant selfishness. He will clearly exhibit the imperfection of saints, as it consists in the inconstancy of their holy affections, which are liable to be interrupted, through their unwatchfulness, by affections, which are wholly sinful.

By the doctrines and duties of the gospel, a wise preacher will show every hearer his real character, conduct and state; and he will teach his people the duties, which they owe their Creator, their fellow creatures and themselves. These duties he will enforce, by the weight and worth of the divine character and decrees, the divine conduct, law and gospel; and by every argument and motive, which the universe can present, to induce and persuade rational creatures

to be true, wise, holy, useful and happy, glorious, and beautiful.

We may see what subjects a wise preacher will choose for his sermons; and he will choose these subjects, that he may teach his people the true knowledge of God and man. Besides, these great and holy doctrines and duties will remove and destroy every doubt, every question, every objection and difficulty, that can be raised by the enmity of devils and the folly of men, against their Creator, Sovereign and Judge.

It is only by the light and power of divine truth, when it is taught systematically and scientifically, that it is possible to exhibit and vindicate the character, decrees, conduct and law of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ; or to maintain and defend a single doctrine or duty of natural and revealed religion, against the obstinate deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of sinful and foolish men. A preacher must be unwise and weak in the duties of his office, if he does not choose for his sermons the most instructive subjects; and teach and preach, plainly, fully and boldly, the fundamental and essential doctrines and duties of religion, in their true light, strength, order and beauty; and also in their proper connections and eternal and infinite consequences. A wise preacher will, surely,

show his knowledge, goodness and wisdom, by the choice of his subjects. And he will choose, for his sermons, the most instructive subjects, that he may still teach his people knowledge.

2. A wise preacher, in the composition of his sermons, will adopt the most instructive method. He finds no greater labor and feels no heavier burden, than is found in the composition of his sermons. Yet he will not attempt, nor desire, to shun this labor, or remove this burden, by any means, which are not suited to give his hearers the largest portion of divine truth, in such a manner, that it can be most easily understood, retained, applied and used by persons of every character and capacity. In the composition of sermons, more than any other concern of their office, preachers show their knowledge or ignorance, their holiness or sinfulness, their wisdom or folly. The doctrines, which they are bound to know and teach, are for ever settled in heaven ; and they are plainly and fully revealed on earth. A preacher has no occasion for labor, or care, to invent truth for the instruction of his people. The whole counsel of God is set before him in the Scriptures. It is his only proper object to teach his people the knowledge of divine truth. But the method he shall adopt to obtain this object, by the most instructive discourses, is

wholly the preacher's concern ; it is his labor ; it is his burden. He must bear this burden and perform this labor, or be viewed and treated as an unfaithful, a slothful and unwise servant.

It is by the instructive composition of sermons, that wise preachers gain and secure their eminence and distinction, in the service of their Lord and in their labors with their people. No preacher will ever gain, or deserve a valuable reputation, any farther than he adopts an instructive method in his sermons. The more truth a minister preaches, so much the worse are the effects of his ministry, if he does not preach it in a right manner, so as to teach his people knowledge, on its proper foundation and in its eternal connections. The wisdom of a preacher consists in the knowledge and use of such a method, for the instruction of his people, that their faith and practice shall stand on the immutable principles of truth and duty. If the instruction of his people be a preacher's object, the most instructive method in his sermons, whatever study and labor it may cost him, will be the means he will use to gain this end. No preacher has reason to expect he can teach any people knowledge, without the severest studies and the most painful labors. To his people a wise preacher can say with Paul, " Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and

service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all." The man is very unwise, who enters the Christian ministry and yet will not choose the end, nor use the means, which belong to his most sacred office. But let no one, who chooses this end, imagine he uses the means to obtain it, unless he gives his whole time, his whole strength and all his heart to his own progress in knowledge, goodness and wisdom, that he may be able to instruct his people. The composition of an instructive sermon is the most important and difficult performance, that can be accomplished by human exertions. The object of a sermon governs the whole concern in its composition. This object is the instruction of ignorant, stupid and stubborn creatures, who are blind, deaf and dead in sin ; and who are disposed and determined to be ignorant of their character, conduct and state ; and also of their danger, duty, safety and happiness. Besides, they are in the midst of error and delusion ; and are constantly exposed to the subtle and powerful temptations of Satan. They also hate and oppose every doctrine and duty of divine truth ; and all the means, which can be used for their instruction and salvation. Let the proper object of a preacher and the character and condition of his hearers be seen and felt ; and there will be no doubt, whether the

composition of a sermon, that can teach any people knowledge, be a labor of primary importance ; and as difficult, as it is important. On this subject, the wise preacher, with the whole counsel of God placed before his mind and wrought into his heart, is perfect weakness. But his hearers must be taught, or perish ; and they must be taught, though they perish. If not taught, the preacher, as well as his hearers, must perish ; and their blood shall be required at his hand. Surely, then, a wise preacher will cry unto God for the spirit of knowledge, goodness and wisdom, that he may know and choose the best method for the instruction of his people. If he is taught and shown this method, in every sermon he will have an important and definite object. To gain this object, he will have a subject no less important and definite. He will plainly and simply state the sentiment, which forms the subject of his sermon ; fully and clearly explain it ; and then prove and show the truth, which he states, by arguments, that are weighty, decisive and invincible. But the doctrinal illustration, in the composition of a sermon, is only the beginning of a preacher's labor. And this labor will be lost, unless he has wisdom to use the sentiment he has explained and proved, by a thorough and practical application.

Any religious sentiment, which is properly illustrated in a sermon, has an intimate and obvious connection with the whole system of divine truth, with the whole system of existence; and with the counsel and glory of God in the purpose and work of redemption. That a preacher may place any subject, or object, before his hearers, in its true light and full weight, he must compose his sermons in such a manner, as shall show every single being and object, in its connection with other beings and objects; and every single doctrine and duty, in its connection with other doctrines and duties. If a preacher has wisdom to compose his sermons in this manner, he can, from every being and object and by every doctrine and duty, pour beams of light on the minds of his hearers; and throw flames of fire into their hearts. Every divine truth, which is properly illustrated, in its application will turn the sword of the Spirit, so as to strike, with its whole weight, and pierce, with its keenest point, the soul of every hearer. "For the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword; piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow; and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, if it be not

blunted by the improper composition of sermons, not diverted from the conscience and heart of the hearers, will make every person see and feel, that he shall gain and enjoy all things for ever, if he will only turn and submit himself to God ; but, if he oppose God and turn from him, that he must fall under the weight of his wrath and be punished and tormented by all things for ever and ever. The object of a wise preacher and the effect of divine truth, when rightly taught and applied, will induce him so to study and compose his sermons, that he can make every hearer see and know what he must for ever know and feel, in the glories of heaven, or in the torments of hell. For this purpose, in view of the whole truth respecting God and man, he will apply his knowledge, goodness and wisdom to the composition of his sermons in the most instructive method.

3. A preacher, who is wise, will deliver his sermons in a manner, that is best suited to convey truth to the minds of his hearers. When he has chosen his subject and composed his sermon, he must, in its delivery, speak as he ought to speak, or he will defeat the object of his ministry. Preachers must be watchful, that they may not, by their manner of speech, in their publick discourses and private instructions, produce in

their hearers impressions and emotions, that do not agree with the proper attention of their mental faculties and the proper exercise of their moral affections, in respect to divine objects. The mind and heart are easily diverted from the objects, which are placed before us by the light of truth. From these objects mankind are naturally inclined to withdraw their attention and affections. If they can so employ themselves, under the instructions of the gospel, as to prevent the conviction and reception of the truth, they will do it. And they can do it, whenever a preacher, in the delivery of his sermons, departs from a rational and natural expression of his sentiments.

He must attend to the position of his body and to every circumstance, that can, in any way, affect his hearers ; and he must subject every look and motion to his great design. He must guide and govern his eye, which is the index of his soul, if he would convey the light of his mind and the fire of his heart to his hearers. Yet, in preachers, the voice, in its connection with the human face, is the glory of our frame. To wise preachers, the use of the voice is an object of constant care, that they may, by the judicious delivery of their sermons, promote and obtain their desires and prayers to God for their people. That a preacher of the gospel may speak, as he ought

to speak, his soul, spirit and body should be sanctified and invigorated, by the almighty power and most gracious unction of the divine Spirit. But who can speak, as he ought to speak, in the name and to the glory of God, for the instruction and salvation of men! In view of the messages, which God commanded Moses to deliver, he exclaimed, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou has spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue." Jeremiah showed that he had been taught of God, when he cried, "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child!" Though Paul was not one whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles, yet he appears to admit from the mouth of his enemies, that "his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible." He earnestly entreated the prayers of the best church then on the earth, that he might open his mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel; and that, in his preaching, he might speak boldly, as he ought to speak. In view of the design and effect of his ministry, well might he exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

If Moses, Jeremiah and the Apostle were so affected by the importance and difficulty of speaking with authority and propriety, for the

instruction of human beings, the delivery of their sermons will be, to wise teachers and preachers, a constant subject of their attention and study, of their prayers and tears. The wise use of the voice, which cannot be obtained without a proper regard to the body and soul, as well as the spirit and heart, is the great point in speaking, as a preacher ought to speak. The human voice, when it is not corrupted by false taste, nor perverted by false art, is a perfect instrument; and most wisely suited to the great and good end, for which it was given. To ministers of the gospel it is given to express and convey, to the human mind, a thorough and practical knowledge of the very sentiments, affections and designs of God himself, that he may be glorified and gratified by the instruction and salvation of ignorant and guilty creatures, through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit. So important and beautiful is the proper expression of proper sentiments and affections by the human voice, that it is a divine proverb, "The tongue of the just is as choice silver." It is also a divine proverb, "The tongue of the wise is health." Again, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life." And again, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold, in pictures of silver." What, then, would be the effect of human speech, when used as it

ought to be, in teaching and preaching the most instructive doctrines, by the most instructive sermons! If the preachers of the gospel had such wisdom, as agrees with the nature and design of their office, they would speak with such power as their adversaries could not gainsay, nor resist. If they had proper sentiments and affections respecting the objects and subjects of divine instruction, in sermons, that were composed with the wisdom and spirit, with which they ought to pray and preach, they would so convey divine truth to the minds of their hearers, that they could no more resist impressions, or prevent convictions, than they could oppose floods of water or resist flames of fire. When shall the preachers of the gospel renounce the wisdom of words and the froth and foam of fancies and feelings; — and declare the whole counsel of God, with such consistency, fidelity, honesty, boldness and zeal, that their sermons shall be, “as the voice of a great multitude and as the voice of many waters and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!” When constant progress in knowledge, goodness and wisdom, from a true regard to God and his church, to their people and their office, shall fill the hearts and govern the tongues and compose the sermons of the teachers and

preachers of divine truth, their hearers will be converted, or confounded ; and the gospel shall soon be preached throughout the world and to every creature.

4. A wise preacher will be faithful to declare and maintain the ordinances of divine appointment. These ordinances receive their existence and sanctity from the official authority of Jehovah, in his universal sovereignty. They are established in his kingdom on earth, from a supreme regard to his glory in the purpose of redemption. The preservation of divine ordinances, in their simplicity and supremacy, in their purity and power, is essential to the holiness of individuals, the honor and comfort of families, the communion and edification of churches, the advancement and prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom and the instruction and conversion of the nations. Divine ordinances respect the whole system of revealed religion ; and the civil, as well as the sacred, the temporal, as well as the eternal interest of human beings. Jesus Christ is the King of kings, as well as the Lord of lords. Civil magistracy, as well as the Christian ministry, in its several departments, is warranted and sanctioned by the sovereign voice of Jesus Christ, as well as by the throne of God. — The teachers and preachers of the gospel are

authorized and obligated to give instruction and admonition to civil magistrates and the subjects of civil government ; but they are not warranted, nor allowed, to use the sword of civil power, nor to assume the weapons of civil government, to enforce the doctrines and duties of religion and policy. They are bound to serve God and man, by the instruction of their people in the knowledge of truth, justice, order, liberty, holiness and happiness, in their various relations and interests, as men, Christians and citizens. So far as any individual or family, any people or State, departs from divine ordinances, in their civil or religious transactions, they rebel against God, oppose his government, transgress his law, reject his gospel and incur his wrath. If the preachers of divine truth teach the people, as they ought to do, they will teach and enforce, by rational and scriptural arguments and motives, the knowledge and practice of subjection and obedience to civil and sacred institutions and ordinances of divine appointment. They are under an official and indispensable obligation to teach and show their hearers the correct knowledge and holy observance of every divine ordinance, whether personal or domestick, ecclesiastical or political. They are bound to teach these ordinances, as they respect individuals, families, churches and

states. A wise preacher will teach individuals, not only that they ought and why they ought to worship God in secret; but how they ought to worship him in religious retirement. He will teach families, not only that they ought and why they ought to maintain the private worship of God and the religious instruction and government of their households; but, also, how they ought to reverence and honor Him in the religious duties of the family. He will teach and show churches, not only that they ought and why they ought but how they ought to maintain the ordinances of publick worship; and to perform the special duties, which they owe to every member of the body, to which they belong; and the special duties of each member to every other member; and also to the whole body. Wise preachers will teach and show the fundamental principles of civil government, liberty and order; and the duties of magistrates, citizens and subjects. Neither individuals, nor communities have any right to do wrong, in their secular interests and political transactions. Nations, cities and towns, as well as churches, families and individuals, are bound, by the immutable principles of moral rectitude, by the law of God and the gospel of his grace, to be true, just and holy in their publick measures, whether they respect

communities or individuals. It is not to be a question of expediency, policy, or compact, with communities, whether they shall acknowledge or deny the existence, perfections, purposes, government and agency of Jehovah, as he exists in the most glorious Trinity; the personality, humanity, divinity, mediation, incarnation, atonement and exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ; the divinity, personality, agency, office and work of the Holy Spirit; or the inspiration, authority and perfection of the Bible. It is not to be decided by any government, nor by any people, whether they shall be bound to remember and sanctify the Sabbath; nor what day shall be remembered and sanctified, as the holy and blessed day of the Lord their God: nor whether they shall favor and promote the principles and progress of the gospel, regard and sustain the ministers and ordinances of religion, befriend Christians, Christian schools and Christian churches; and perform the duties of philanthropy to all human beings and of righteousness and benevolence to inferior animals. They are bound by bonds, which they cannot break and which cannot be broken nor relaxed, to know and love the truth and to do what is right and good, on these subjects. All power in heaven and earth is given to Jesus Christ; and his will is to be done on earth as it

is done in heaven ; and he requires and binds his ministers to teach all nations to observe all things whatsoever he commands. It is not left to human wisdom and policy, in the state or in the church, to decide at what time the Sabbath shall begin and end ; what shall be the character and obligations of Christian ministers and civil magistrates ; what doctrines shall be taught and what duties shall be done ; what ordinances shall be established and observed ; who are the proper subjects and what the mode of baptism ; or what shall be required in order to a publick profession of religion ; or what are the qualifications for admission and communion at the Lord's table.

Nor are Jewish, or popish, or heathen, or infidel maxims and customs, nor worldly interests, nor popular opinions, nor unholy amusement and gratification, to determine the object, or nature, or manner of Christian psalmody ; which is to be performed, understandingly and reverently, to the glory and praise of God, in spirit and in truth, by singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord. Under the present dispensation, musical instruments, in the worship of God, are irrational and anti-scriptural and heathenish. They are an abomination and provocation in the sight of God ; an injury and reproach to his servants and children ; and an

occasion of offence and wickedness to sinners. Neither is it left to states or nations, to churches or towns, to Christians or ministers, to determine whether ecclesiastical government, discipline and order shall be vested in the pope, in the bishop, the presbytery, synod, or general assembly, the consociation, the association, or any permanent or special council. For the Lord Jesus Christ is the head over all things to the church. Jesus Christ is King in his own kingdom; and none else can have any authority over his subjects in the concerns of conscience and salvation. Every departure from the government, discipline, order, peace and truth, which he has appointed by his supreme authority, is treachery and rebellion against him. Nor is it left for man to decide what is true or false, right or wrong, in respect to the divine ordinance of marriage and domestick relations and obligations; nor whether the head of every family shall be prophet, priest, and king in his own house and shall instruct, restrain and control the subjects of his domestick government. Neither ministers, churches, nor parents have any reason, warrant or right, to commit the care of souls in Sabbath schools, or Bible classes, to unauthorized and unqualified instructors, against the divine ordinance of parental government and instruction; and also

against a proper attendance on the duties and enjoyments of the Sabbath and of publick worship and the official instructions of Christian ministers. Besides, stated days and times for prayer and praise and other religious performances of a publick nature, except on the Sabbath, without any special event in divine providence to require and justify such measures, are not of Jesus Christ, but are anti-Christian and will receive the disapprobation of wise and faithful ministers, of well-taught churches and judicious Christians. From the mouth of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, wise preachers will teach and warn individuals, families, churches and nations of the sin, guilt, danger and ruin, that await all persons, who profane, abuse, neglect, increase, or lessen aught in respect to the ordinances, which God has appointed and sanctified for his own glory and for his communion with his people in his kingdom on earth.

In respect to churches, they will watch every movement and guard every point, lest, by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so their minds should be corrupted from the simplicity, that is in Jesus Christ. Their zeal for the purity, unity, order and peace of the house of God and for the proper observance of every divine ordinance, will be a con-

stant and vehement flame, which many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown. The jealousy of God for his own worship and honor, and the wrath and vengeance of his offended and insulted majesty, against rebellious nations and apostate churches and ungodly families, will arouse a wise preacher to the battle and gird him with strength, that he may stand in the law of God and in the truth and order of the gospel and be approved and blessed of God, when he shall bring the sword against the kingdoms and nations, who have departed from his ordinances and instructions ; and when he shall arise, in his fury, against unholy and unfaithful churches and families and shall, by seven-fold punishments, avenge the quarrel of his covenant. It is only by the faithful and zealous instruction of his people in the knowledge and observance of divine ordinances, that a preacher can secure the protection and favor of God, the presence and assistance of the Lord Jesus Christ and the instruction, comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit. Never, until ministers and preachers of the gospel know and do their duty respecting divine ordinances, will divisions, contentions, injustice, oppression, disputes, parties, violence and war, be removed from the church, or from the state ; and the “kingdom and the dominion and the greatness

of the kingdom under the whole heaven be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." It is only by the ordinances of his own appointment, that God will preserve on earth the true knowledge of his nature and existence, that he will glorify his name, advance his kingdom, unite his saints, confound his foes, remove Satan from this world and convert all nations to himself. Every wise preacher will be humble, faithful, watchful, zealous and bold, to know, teach and maintain the commandments and ordinances of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, whether personal, domestick, ecclesiastical, or political ; that he may help to overturn and overturn and overturn this world, with its unholy interests and establishments ; that the kingdom, which is not of this world and which cannot be shaken, may arise and fill the earth with light, love and peace, with joy, glory, beauty and praise.

5. Since a wise preacher will constantly teach his people knowledge, this object will influence and govern all his conduct. The great design of his ministry will induce him to give himself to the acquisition and communication of divine knowledge. This object will influence his sentiments, his affections, interests, exertions and enjoyments. His constant object will move and turn his heart, which will govern his conduct.

His own heart, as well as the bonds of his office, will lead him to separate himself from every secular employment and worldly interest, that he may not be entangled with the affairs of this life, but may devote himself, wholly, to the instruction of his people. His study will be his chosen home. It will be the place of his heart. There he will rejoice to exclude himself from every intrusion and interruption. In his study he will give himself to prayer, to reading, to reflection, to meditation and self-examination. That he may gain the proper object of his office and of his heart, whatever is exhibited in creation, providence and redemption, will arrest and engage his attention. The Scriptures, which reveal the counsel of God and the desires of his heart, a wise preacher will read and study, with the most teachable, reverent, humble and thankful spirit. He will suffer no human authority and no selfish interest to turn his mind, from the infallible and immutable instructions of divine truth. Nor will he seek, or desire, to accommodate the high and holy doctrines of the gospel to the pride and folly of man. A wise preacher, with some good method, will read and study the whole Bible. He will make every sentence and every sentiment, in the Book of God, an object of attention. He will be careful to understand and

construe the Scriptures, by the plainest and most evident principles. The holiness and sovereignty of God and the sinfulness and dependence of man, which may be seen and known, independently of the Scriptures ; and which will be known and felt, with increasing certainty, by every person of a good and honest heart ; will be the primary and fundamental principles, by which he will study and explain the Bible.

By these principles he will discern the doctrines and duties of the Gospel, on their proper foundation and in their intimate connection ; so that he will acquire real knowledge and assurance on religious subjects ; and not merely notions and opinions. The first, simple and certain principles of theology will be a sure and safe guide and guard, in his investigation of the most difficult subjects. As he will be careful to proceed by the light of truth, so as to have real knowledge, as far as he forms a decision, he will be prepared to examine, with confidence and judgment, the various opinions and controversies which exist respecting religion. He will desire to know the principles and arguments of every class of philosophers and theologians. With a firm and thankful assurance, that he has the knowledge of the truth, he will be prepared to receive what ought to be received and to reject

what ought to be rejected, from the sentiments of every author, whom he may read and of every person, with whom he may converse. The labors of orthodox and pious authors he will highly esteem and wisely use ; but he will seriously and practically consider, that there is but one teacher, who can demand and deserve entire submission to his authority and instructions. A wise preacher will perceive and remember, that the approbation and influence, which even pious authors receive, are often derived from the errors, which they retain rather than from the truth, which they teach ; and that the errors of such authors, as they have the sanction of beloved and worthy names, are peculiarly injurious to the thorough knowledge and direct progress of divine truth. He will reject from their sentiments, with the spirit of religious independence and impartiality, whatever does not agree with the lively oracles of God and the first and most certain principles of knowledge.

The ability, ingenuity and influence of infidels, errorists and sectarians, will engage a large portion of a wise preacher's attention ; and occasion him a high degree of laborious and profitable employment. Whatever reason and truth they may advance, he will receive and use against themselves, in favor of the gospel ; while their

errors and delusions, when tried by the word of God, will serve to confirm and illustrate, in his judgment, the precious instructions of divine revelation. By a thorough and liberal acquaintance with their spirit and object, their opinions and arguments, he will be prepared to judge and act, with candor and fairness, with honesty and decision, respecting the numerous and various opposers of the truth and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Under the influence of divine truth, he will not dare, tamely, to follow any human leader; nor will he fear to believe and teach, though he stand alone, what is plainly taught by the works and by the word of God. It will be his duty and his honor to advance and not to retreat, in his knowledge and defence of the gospel; and reproach and contempt, for the sake of Christ and his truth, will be his triumph, his strength and joy.

The knowledge and love of the truth will so comfort and satisfy a wise preacher of the gospel, amidst the darkness and vanity, the delusion and misery of this evil world, that he will most ardently desire, that other persons may enjoy communion with him, "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." The more thorough and accurate may be his knowledge of the truth, the more highly he will esteem and enjoy every single doctrine and duty and blessing of the gospel.

The farther he advances in his instructions, the brighter and pleasanter will he cause the truth to shine on every subject, which he places before the minds of his hearers. Every week will he labor and study to make some progress in the truth, that he may, on every successive Sabbath, still teach his people knowledge. He will depend more on the regular services of the Sabbath, which is the appointment of divine wisdom and goodness, with private instructions in the family and a faithful attention to every single person, who may need and desire special instruction, for the salvation of his people and the promotion of religion and morality, than on the contrivance and management of any human schemes and all human schemes and measures and excitements. He will also be deeply and solemnly sensible, that the value of the Sabbath to his people chiefly depends on his own example, his devotions and studies.

While he watches over his hearers, with the deepest and tenderest affections, as they are passing through the trials and changes of this life, he will derive, from the events of divine providence, such instructions and admonitions, as shall cause his people to hear the voice and see the hand of God, in the good they enjoy and in the evil they suffer. The duties of his ministry will produce

in his heart more ardent desires and a deeper concern for his people, as he perceives that they and he are rapidly passing from the scenes of time into eternity. To be prepared to stand before God, in the presence of his people ; and before his people, in the presence of God, at the great and last day, will become, every year and every week, an object of increasing interest and solemnity to a wise preacher of the gospel. With such an object before his mind and on his heart, nothing can move him from the true design of his office and the constant object of his life. He can say, as Paul said, "None of these things move me ; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." In this manner, the great and proper object of his ministry will influence and govern the whole conduct of a wise preacher.

6. The ministry of a wise preacher will produce the most permanent effects. The effects of his ministry rest on the eternal and immutable principles of truth, justice, goodness and wisdom. What is built on this solid foundation, by a wise preacher, will consist of gold, silver and precious stones ; and it will abide, when "the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." Though

the appearance of a wise preacher's work may not be so great and showy, as the work of such men as attempt to build with wood, hay and stubble ; yet the effects and the reward of his labor will be vastly greater in reality. The present and apparent effects of his ministry will not arise above the instruction and knowledge, which he communicates to the minds of his hearers. Yet its real effects will be as permanent, as divine truth ; and boundless, as eternity. The object and influence of a wise preacher will not produce such a degree of passion and noise, as often exist among an untaught or deluded people, whose ignorance or error is the mother of their irrational and unscriptural devotion. But so far as a people are influenced by such a preacher, their sentiments, affections, practices and enjoyments will accord with the truth ; and they will be holy, useful and pleasant in the sight of God and man.

The hearers of such a preacher will understand the foundation, which supports the whole system of Christianity, which preserves the church of God from destruction, which secures and promotes the highest interests of the universe, which furnishes the proper motives to every Christian duty and sanctifies and elevates the ordinances, services and enjoyments of the gospel.

A people, who are favored with the instructions of a wise preacher, will know the worth and feel the weight of the heavenly treasures which God puts into such a chosen and polished vessel ; though it be of the earth and must soon return to the dust. His object, instruction and example can not be hid ; but they will constantly rise with greater strength and shine with greater clearness and beauty. Though the effects of his ministry will not be sudden and violent in their progress, they will be permanent, powerful and triumphant. They will continue and advance, until they have served to spread the light of truth unto the ends of the earth ; and to cause the blessings of the gospel to prevail to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills.

Though such may be the effects of a wise preacher's ministry, yet he will be first known and best known to his own people, whom he has constantly taught divine knowledge, in the spirit of goodness, with that wisdom, which is the highest gift of God to his chosen, beloved and official servants in the kingdom of his own Son. But a wise teacher and preacher of divine truth cannot be known, in the objects and duties of his office, without the most solemn and affecting impressions and the most durable and awful effects. The present influence of his instructions

on his people is like the light and warmth of the rising sun, on the air and the earth ; and like the dews of heaven, on the tender herb and the lovely flowers of the garden ; and like showers of rain, on dry and thirsty lands. Under his ministry every hearer must receive the richest blessings from God, or be nigh unto the bitterest and heaviest curses. His hearers will be formed and will form themselves, with peculiar rapidity, into vessels of mercy or vessels of wrath. Nor will the effects of his ministry on his hearers cease or lessen, when his eyes shall be shut and his ears shall be closed and his tongue shall be silent, in the grave. But they will continue and increase in the knowledge, holiness and happiness of saints ; and in the blindness, sinfulness and misery of sinners, in the future state, unto the end of the world. Then, at the judgment of the great day, they will begin in their eternal connections and consequences. Yet, they will but begin ; for they will never, never, never end. They will continue and increase, in the joys and songs of heaven ; and in the torments and shrieks of hell, with the ever-beginning and never-ending periods of eternity.

The sentiments, the sermons, the prayers, the labors, the conflicts and tears of a wise preacher, in exact proportion to his knowledge, goodness

and wisdom, will be subservient to the glory and praise of God and the honor and the joy of the Lord Jesus Christ, as they shall appear in the vessels of mercy, which were prepared unto glory ; and in the vessels of wrath, which were fitted for destruction, under his ministry, by the holy and sovereign agency of God, according to his eternal and most glorious purpose and decrees. Wise preachers will forever be “unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved ; and in them that perish : to the one, the savour of death unto death ; and to the other, the savour of life unto life.”

7. From the reasons, which induce a wise preacher to teach his people knowledge, it is evident God highly favors a people, to whom he gives a wise preacher of the gospel. No other ordinance under heaven, given among men, is more important and benevolent than the Christian ministry. The instruction, which God gave by the teachers of divine truth, from the first promise of the Saviour until his appearance on earth, was accounted the greatest benefit, which he bestowed on the world before the flood and on his ancient people. The instruction of human beings, in divine knowledge, was the object of the Saviour's ministry on earth. When he ascended into heaven, the richest gifts he received

for men were apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. By the instructions of his servants, in the ministry of the gospel, God reveals and gives himself with his Son and Spirit to his people, in the perfection and glory of his name; and he offers himself with the blessings and honors of his kingdom to every person, to whom he sends the word of his truth and grace.

In the design and effect of their labors, who can be compared to the able and faithful teachers of divine truth? What names, on the records of time, can stand higher and fairer than Enoch and Moses, Noah and Samuel, Elijah and Elisha, David and Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the other prophets of God? What names, since the Lord Jesus Christ preached the gospel on earth, can be equal to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; to James, Peter, Jude and Paul? In the volumes of uninspired history can any persons be found, whose services ought to receive, from God and man, greater honor than may be justly given to the teachers and preachers of divine truth, whom God has chosen and called and placed in their high and fearful office? Who deserve to be known and loved in New England, rather than the true and wise teachers and pastors, whom God has appointed and prepared for the instruction, guidance and comfort of his peo-

ple, amidst the errors, dangers and afflictions of this evil world?

To the numerous and honored catalogue of New England worthies, in the Christian ministry, may now be added a name, which no one, who regards the decisions of truth and justice, will be afraid, or ashamed to place with the first Three; and the first of the Three, among the teachers and preachers of the gospel in the New England churches. No one, who has had a personal acquaintance with Emmons, or understands the ever advancing knowledge, goodness and wisdom with which he taught the people, can refuse before God, or man, to place him *first*, among the able and faithful ministers of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let Edwards have the praise, which his talents, piety, diligence, faithfulness and usefulness deserve; let Hopkins have the praise, which his self-denial, honesty, decision, boldness, patience and faith demand; let their renown remain in the churches; yet it can not truly and fairly take any thing from the grace and wisdom, with which God was pleased to distinguish NATHANAEL EMMONS. In respect to his personal appearance and native talents; in respect to his acquired abilities and general erudition in literary and scientifick attainments; he neither claimed, nor

could justly receive the highest place. In the presence of Dr. Bellamy and Dr. Edwards, of Dr. Smalley and Dr. Strong, of Dr. Spring and Samuel Niles, he cheerfully bowed to their evident superiority in many endowments: yet it is believed they would have given him the first place in the composition of sermons and the illustration of the duties and doctrines of natural and revealed Theology. President Dwight, in the variety of his attainments, extensive observations and instructive fluency of elevated conversation; and President Kirkland with his unequalled sagacity, practical discernment and impartial kindness in his intercourse with every class of men, Christians and citizens, deserved and received from Dr. Emmons an acknowledged eminence; yet neither of these gentlemen either would, or could profess, in theological attainments and ministerial fidelity, independence and perseverance, to place himself before the modest, trembling and prayerful watchman of Franklin.

With reverence and gratitude to God for his gifts and mercies, in respect to religious teachers in New England, it is believed that he formed and placed Dr. Emmons in the Christian ministry, though the last in the order of time among our departed worthies, yet the first in the purity, simplicity, consistency, transparency, humility,

maturity, energy, dignity and beauty of his official character.

The character of a wise teacher and preacher, as it has been taught and shown in this discourse, is not a picture of fancy. It is drawn from real life, in the bright and pleasant colors of truth. It was exemplified, by the late pastor and teacher of the church and people in Franklin. *Because he was wise, he still taught the people knowledge.* He taught the true knowledge of God and man. That he might teach his people, it was his constant object, from the commencement to the conclusion of his ministry, to advance in knowledge, goodness and wisdom. His motives, in his studies and instructions were founded on a proper regard to his office, his people, the church of God and God himself, in his everlasting holiness and universal supremacy.

That Dr. Emmons may be justly called, not merely a wise preacher, but the wise preacher, if the constant instruction of his people in divine knowledge be the test of a preacher's wisdom, may be evident from a candid attention to his conduct in his official character. With this "burning and shining light" before our eyes, it is now proposed to state what Dr. Emmons, "according to the wisdom given unto him," has been and done in the duties of his office.

He was born, the first day of May, 1745, in East-Haddam, in the county of Middlesex, Connecticut. In his childhood he possessed and manifested a peculiar desire for knowledge. But on account of various difficulties and discouragements, he was not prepared to offer himself for admission into college, until the nineteenth year of his life. Several circumstances, which were afflictive and painful, attended his examination for an entrance into the college of his native State. While Emmons was a student, Yale College, for two years and a half year, was under the Presidency of Rev. Thomas Clap, whose character and conduct had a most powerful and permanent influence, in the establishment and promotion of the interests and reputation of that distinguished Seminary. The beneficial impressions, which were made on his mind by that great and good man, were retained and mentioned by him, with reverence and gratitude through his life.

The other year and a half of his residence in College, Rev. Dr. Naphtali Dagget was the President. He was a man of more worth, than his cotemporaries were generally willing to acknowledge; or than his successors have been willing to believe.

Though Emmons, before his admission into college, had not the advantages, which are com-

monly afforded young men, who receive a public education, yet, in the judgment of his class, he was accounted worthy of the most honorable appointment, which they had the privilege to bestow ; as they assigned him the Philosopick oration, on the conclusion of their examination for the Baccalaureate. Such an honor, it will be believed, is rarely bestowed on the most favored sons of science, when it is considered, that Joseph Lyman, Samuel Wales, John Treadwell and John Trumbull were members of his class. These eminent gentlemen retained a constant and increasing esteem and affection for Dr. Emmons, until the conclusion of their earthly existence. In 1767, they received the Baccalaureate.

Through the favor of divine Providence, Emmons was placed, for his theological preparation for the ministry, in the families of Rev. Nathan Strong of Coventry and Rev. Dr. John Smalley of Berlin. Mr. Strong was a man of sound judgment, of a faithful and watchful spirit, mild, firm, cautious and ardent in the duties and trials of his office.

Of Dr. Smalley, Rev. John Marsh says, in his Ecclesiastical History, "he was a man of astonishing logical powers, who contributed more than any one of his age to the progress of theological science." In many important respects, Dr.

Smalley never had his superior, nor his equal, as a teacher and preacher of the gospel, among the theologians of New England. Dr. Emmons always spoke of him with high esteem and tender and grateful affection. While he was with Dr. Smalley, his classmate, John Trumbull, made him a visit ; and Dr. Emmons declared, that Trumbull, on that visit and by a letter, which he sent him, gave him more instruction than he had ever received in all other ways, respecting the composition of a sermon.

In the year 1769, while he resided with Dr. Smalley, he became savingly acquainted with the living and true God and the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power and grace of the Divine Spirit. The same year he made a publick profession of religion and united himself to the church in the parish of Millington, in his native town, which was then in the county of Hartford, but is now in the county of Middlesex. Rev. Diodate Johnson was then the pastor of that church. On the 3d day of October, 1769, Emmons was approved, by the South Association in Hartford county, to be a preacher of the gospel and a candidate for the Christian ministry. His approbation to be a preacher of the gospel was attended and followed by peculiar difficulty and opposition, which were very painful to his youthful and modest spirit ;

yet were, as he believed, in their effects, highly useful to himself. An important document respecting his examination and approbation was sought and obtained, at my request, by my respected and worthy friend, James L. Kingsley, who was one of my classmates two years in Williams College ; and who has been a teacher in Yale College in the offices of Tutor and Professor, from the year 1801, to the present time.

On the 21st day of April, 1773, NATHANAEL EMMONS was ordained the pastor of the church and teacher of the people in a parish of Wrentham, which has since become the town of Franklin, so called in honor of Dr. Franklin ; from whom was received a generous and valuable selection of books. On the reception of Dr. Franklin's donation, Dr. Emmons, in the year 1786, preached a sermon, which William Cowper, the Christian poet, declared to be, in his judgment, the greatest sermon, that was ever preached.

Rev. Dr. Levi Hart of Preston, in Connecticut, preached the sermon at the ordination of Dr. Emmons. The services, on the occasion, were not performed in the meeting house, but under the expansive canopy of heaven. The audience, generally, sat on seats above the ordaining council and the pastor elect. From this singular circumstance, Dr. Emmons used to say, with approbation

and complacency, that he was ordained *under his church and people*.

Men, brethren, and fathers! God prepared this chosen vessel for you and sent him to you, at an affecting period in respect to the church and people in this place ; and the churches and people in the American Colonies. The difficulties, between this country and Great Britain, had then come to a solemn and fearful crisis. Scarcely had your youthful and beloved minister found a home among you, when the war of our National existence and independence was begun by the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill. Soon after his settlement in the ministry, God took a most decisive method to prepare him for the duties and trials of his office, by an awful bereavement, which called him to consign his family, the wife of his youth and two darling sons to the lonely grave. She died the 22d of June, 1778. His two sons died in one day, about two months after the death of their mother.

Through the war you were favored with his instruction, example and prayers. The scenes and events, which arose after the establishment of our national independence, in this country, in the church of God on earth and among the nations of the world during his ministry, were the most astonishing that have occurred in the

records of uninspired history. In his day, the conspiracy of Infidels and Atheists against religion, government and humanity, against truth and peace, order and liberty, shook the foundations of kingdoms and nations; and attempted to destroy from the earth the church and kingdom of God and the name and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. In his day, the "three unclean spirits, like frogs, were coming from the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working wonders, which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Through their influence, impiety, infidelity and inhumanity, delusion, disorder and wickedness in every form, have arisen in New England and in other parts of the world, above what was ever before known on earth. Error, folly and vanity, declension, lukewarmness and stupidity have seized and destroyed many churches in this land; and have reached every church and town, every neighborhood and family. These perilous designs and movements of the deceiver and destroyer, of the liar and murderer, Dr. Emmons perceived and opposed with peculiar constancy and firmness. He was a faithful and valiant watchman, for the church and State, against the hosts of hell.

In these times of peril he yielded nothing of the gospel, in respect to its ordinances and discipline, its doctrines and duties, its promises and threatenings, its rewards and punishments, either to gain the smiles or shun the frowns of this false and foolish world. Though he was often and commonly obliged to stand alone, in respect to assistance and encouragement from other ministers, yet he was determined, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the power and grace of the Spirit, for the truth and glory of God, not to retreat, but advance in the terrible warfare against the powers of earth and hell. And God was with him, in the exceeding greatness of his mighty power and the exceeding riches of his grace by his word, spirit and providence for his instruction, assistance, protection and comfort, in his conflicts and sorrows, to succeed and bless his labors for the instruction and edification of saints and the conviction and conversion of sinners. In several seasons of peculiar refreshment from the presence of the Lord, he was prospered and honored by the powerful and special effusions of the Divine Spirit. These "years of the right hand of the Most High" greatly enlarged and strengthened the church in this town and caused it to be among the most numerous of the churches in the rural towns of

New England. But this church, by the instruction and guidance of its able and faithful pastor and teacher, was more distinguished by the sentiments and character of its members than by their number.

In the time of Dr. Emmons's ministry, God was pleased by his providence and his spirit to cause the most important and affecting movements, that have existed since the world was made, for the general and permanent prevalence of his gospel. Nor was he the last, but with the first, to understand and discern the signs of the times; to distinguish and promote genuine revivals of religion; to favor the diffusion of religious intelligence, pecuniary contributions for religious purposes and the noble designs and exertions of missionary societies and other benevolent institutions. On the first Tuesday in each quarter of the year, for twelve years, he preached a publick lecture in the meeting-house, on the duty of prayer, for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, according to the proposal and agreement for a general concert of prayer, which was recommended by the friends of the Lord Jesus Christ in Scotland, in the year 1744; and which was most powerfully supported by President Edwards in his "Humble attempt to promote an explicit agreement and

visible union of God's people, in extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion and the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth." With his instructions on these objects and subjects, Dr. Emmons looked over this land and over the earth, day after day and year after year, with ardent desires and constant prayers, that God would purify and enlarge his kingdom and bring all nations to serve, praise and worship the living and true God and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the gospel of his grace, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

But the church and people of his charge, in a special manner, were before his eyes and on his heart, day and night, through the long term of his labors, conflicts and prayers. He continued his publick services as your pastor and teacher until the 13th day of May, 1827, fifty-four years from his ordination and fifty-eight years from his approbation to preach the gospel. From the conclusion of his publick services in the ministry, his concern and affection for you neither ceased nor lessened, until his eyes were closed, his voice was silenced and his heart was stilled by the king of terrors. You are now called to the last scene of his earthly existence. By this scene you are most solemnly admonished to consider and remember the peculiar favor of God to this

church and people, by the gift of such a preacher.

The character of a wise preacher, in the selection of the most instructive subjects for his sermons, was eminently and wonderfully illustrated by Dr. Emmons in the whole course of his ministry. He has done, in the choice of his subjects, what has been ascribed to a wise preacher in the present discourse. He has given, in his sermons, more clear, thorough and consistent instruction in the true knowledge of God and man than has ever been given by any teacher of divine truth, except "the holy men of God, who spake as moved by the Holy Spirit."

He has taught and shown, on the principles of real science, the existence of God, the properties of his nature, his mental attributes, his moral perfections, his obligations and affections, his relations and offices. He has taught the object, extent, the goodness, wisdom and glory of his decrees; the nature, holiness and sovereignty of his universal and invincible agency; his pure, perfect, eternal and ever increasing happiness in the contemplation and accomplishment of the desires of his heart and the counsel of his will. The plenary inspiration of the Bible, the revealed manner of the Divine existence in three distinct persons and one nature and essence, the object,

purpose and work of God in redemption, the mediation and incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, the union of divinity and humanity in his wonderful and glorious personage, the divinity, personality, agency, office and work of the Holy Spirit, the doctrines of election, atonement, regeneration, justification, sanctification, reprobation, the general judgment, endless rewards in heaven and endless punishment in hell, he has explained and proved, with unequalled perspicuity, fidelity and discretion.

The originality, independence and impartiality of his instructions are very evident in his discourse on the essential difference between moral good and evil; and the supreme and inherent perfection and beauty of true virtue and real holiness, independently of their great and happy effects; and also on the harmony of divine and human agency in the moral affections and actions of holy and unholy creatures. In the same manner he has taught the doctrine of justification, as it consists in the forgiveness and salvation of penitent believers, wholly and only for Christ's sake; and as the peculiar blessing, which they receive through his atoning sacrifice, while they are approved and rewarded for every holy affection and action.

The false and absurd notion, that God accepts

believers only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us and received by faith alone, he taught and showed to be without any foundation, either in reason, or in the scriptures. God can not, for the righteousness of Christ, nor for any other reason, accept or approve what is unholy and sinful, either in sinners or in saints.

He truly and plainly taught the doctrine of sanctification, as it begins in the hearts of sinners by the voluntary exercise of holy affections, through the sovereign and special influence of the Divine Spirit, by the light of divine truth ; and as it is maintained and advanced, in the persevering obedience and watchfulness of the people of God, by his word, spirit and providence, until they are formed into vessels of mercy and prepared unto glory.

He has taught the imperfection of Christians, as it is taught in the Scriptures, as it appears in their conduct and is evident in their experience ; and as it really consists in the inconstancy of their holy affections and actions, which are pure and perfect in their nature ; while their unholy affections and actions are entirely sinful and peculiarly hateful and guilty. The sentiments and instructions of Dr. Emmons, on this subject, are as certain and evident, as the essential difference and opposition between holiness and unholiness ;

and they are as important and beneficial, as the knowledge of truth and duty respecting the very essence of saving conversion and experimental and practical religion and morality. The knowledge of the truth on this subject is necessary to a true and thorough knowledge of the peculiar character of real Christians, the nature of regeneration and the essential difference between saints and sinners. It is no less necessary to the duty of self examination, to the intelligent advancement of Christians in the graces and virtues of the Spirit and the rational and scriptural consolations and enjoyments of the gospel. Nor was he less distinguished for his instructions respecting the depravity of mankind, according to the purpose and by the will and act of God, in connection with the apostacy of Adam and in consequence of his original transgression. But he did not believe that any of his posterity are guilty of his first sin ; or that they sinned in him, or fell with him ; or are ever sinful, or guilty, only by their own personal and voluntary offences. Nor did he maintain, but reject the absurd notion of a corrupt nature, which has been supposed to be derived from the common parents of the human family and to affect the mental faculties of their numerous offspring, so as to destroy their natural ability to perceive

and perform their duty. He understood and maintained the difference and distinction between the moral depravity of mankind by nature, according to the holy and wise purpose of God ; and a supposed physical depravity, which is, in the nature of things, absurd and false.

Equally correct and consistent are his sentiments on moral virtue and holiness, which consist in impartial, universal and disinterested benevolence ; and on the nature and essence of moral depravity and sinfulness, as they consist in total, malignant and voluntary selfishness, which is wholly opposed to the supreme love of our Creator and the true love of our fellow creatures and ourselves, which are required both in the law and gospel. He taught the true doctrine of the guiltiness and ill desert of sinners. He taught and proved, from the nature of moral evil, from the dictates of conscience, from the law of God and the gospel of his grace, that they, who once sin, are for ever guilty and deserve the wrath and curse of God ; and are justly condemned to endless punishment in the prison of despair and torment. He did not believe, that the mercy of God, or the atonement of Jesus Christ, or the repentance and conversion of sinners, or the perfect and eternal holiness of saints, or any

punishment, however severe and permanent, can ever remove or lessen the ill desert of a person, who has once sinned. For forgiveness and salvation never remove from a person the desert of punishment, although they save penitent believers from the punishment, which they will deserve to suffer for ever.

He taught the duty of sinners to change their hearts from unholy to holy affections, to approve of the divine law in its prohibitions, requirements and penalties, to submit themselves into the hands of God, to devote themselves wholly and for ever to his service and praise, to repent of sin, to believe and obey the gospel, to make a publick profession of religion, to join the church of Jesus Christ and to walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. He taught and urged sinners to perform these duties without reluctance, without reserve and without delay, in connection with their entire dependence on God for every affection and action. For their dependence on God is the foundation and the reason of their obligation to know, love and serve him for ever. If they were independent of their Creator, they would be under no obligation to him.

He no less clearly taught the duty of saints, in their numerous and various relations, as men, as

Christians, citizens, patriots and philanthropists. He taught and showed saints, that they are bound by bonds, which they can never break, nor relax, to be constantly and perfectly holy, on the foundation of their dependence on God for every holy and gracious affection ; while it is his purpose and will, that they should be imperfect in this life.

He also taught, preached and proved the difference between an object, or event, or action, as it is in itself and its own nature ; and as it is in the cause, design, connections and consequences of its existence. Nor were his sentiments, on this subject, metaphysical and philosophical speculations, but scriptural, rational and practical principles.

In order to exhibit the official faithfulness and wisdom of Dr. Emmons, as they have been manifested by his instructions, it is necessary to consider his sentiments and conduct respecting subjects and doctrines, for which he has been most reproached and hated ; and yet deserves to be most highly approved, honored and loved.

The object, purpose and conduct of God in the existence of moral evil, especially in the reprobation of the non-elect, as they are revealed in the Bible and confirmed in divine providence, as they will be exhibited at the final judgment and

by the retributions of eternity, are the great subject of contention on earth, of complaint and blasphemy in hell and of reverence, delight and praise in heaven. On this subject the apostle carries his opponent and his opponent carries the apostle, as far as the supreme and holy agency of God, in the formation and perdition of the reprobate, for his own glory in the highest perfection of his kingdom, as well as in the formation and salvation of the elect, for the same wise and holy purpose. So far every human being must be carried, by the strong hand of truth ; and there submit himself to God and be at peace with him ; or be opposed to his Creator, Sovereign and Judge for ever. In view of the supreme agency of God in the formation of the vessels of his wrath and the vessels of his mercy, every mouth, that is not opened in praise to him, must be shut in endless despair. For how can they, who deny the doctrine of reprobation, stand against those, who deny the doctrine of election ? How can they, who deny either of these doctrines, stand against those, who deny the doctrine of eternal punishment ? And how can they, who deny the doctrine of eternal punishment, stand against those, who deny the doctrine of salvation, through the sovereign and special grace of God ? In order to be consistent, the whole gospel must be denied,

or the doctrine of eternal, personal, efficacious reprobation must be understood and maintained. If we deny the purpose, the conduct and glory of God respecting the perdition of the non-elect, we must, to be consistent, deny his purpose, conduct and glory respecting the salvation of the elect. If we deny the object, purpose and conduct of God, as they are revealed in the gospel, what remains of the exceeding riches of his grace in Christ Jesus and in the redemption of his people? Without the true gospel of God and the purpose and work of redemption, to what purpose has he created, preserved and governed all creatures and all things?

The Holy Spirit, who moved Paul to speak and write, carries him in his sentiments and instructions, as far and as high as the doctrine of election and reprobation; and he carries both these doctrines, as high and as far, as the unconditional determination of Jehovah to save the elect and destroy the non-elect; and his direct and positive agency in having mercy on whom he will and hardening whom he will. The doctrine of reprobation, as it is revealed in the Bible and as it is taught and proved by Paul and Emmons, must be believed and defended; or there is nothing, in the word and work of God and in his decrees and perfections, that can be believed and

defended against the bold and heavy assaults of Satan and the enemies and haters of God and his truth.

Let the character of Dr. Emmons be fairly tried, before heaven, earth and hell ; and stand, or fall, by what the Holy Spirit teaches and proves on the agency and object of God, in the formation of the righteous for glory and of the wicked for wrath. “ For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy : and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, who showeth mercy. As the Scripture saith to Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will ; and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt then say to me, Why doth he yet find fault ? for who hath resisted his will ? Nay ; but, O man ! Who art thou, that repliest against God ? Shall the thing formed say to him, that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus ? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor ? — What, if God willing to show his wrath and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the

vessels of wrath fitted to destruction ? and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory ? ”

If Dr. Emmons has varied in his sentiments, affections and objects, as a minister of the gospel, from the word and work of God, let it be shown by Scripture, reason and fact. If he has been wise and faithful in his instructions, let those, who deny, oppose, or conceal the doctrines he taught, be silent ; or learn and speak the truth.

Dr. Emmons taught and preached the doctrines of the Bible, as the means of duty ; and not merely as ends. The performance of duties can never rise higher, nor extend farther than the knowledge of doctrines. He was as highly and strongly practical in his instructions, as he was faithfully and wisely doctrinal. Should Dr. Emmons and his system of duties and doctrines be approved and confirmed, in the final judgment, many, who have been first, will be last ; and some, who have been last, will be first. But what servant of God, or friend of man, has any reason to fear, that he will not be approved of God, for what he has been condemned by man ; and be most loudly praised in heaven for what he has been most blamed on earth ? It will be known in heaven, on earth and in hell, that Em-

mons feared and served, trusted and honored God in the duties of his office ; and wisely and meekly followed the instructions of Moses and the prophets, of Jesus Christ and the apostles, while he studied, labored and prayed for the constant instruction of his people in the true knowledge of God and man ; and that he might not shun to declare the whole counsel of God and might show the work of his wisdom and power in the wonders of creation, providence and redemption.

By the selection and illustration of the most instructive subjects, he has demonstrated and established the great doctrines and duties of the gospel, as they are taught and shown by the word and work of God, in a manner which entitles him to be accounted the wisest of uninspired theologians.

Dr. Emmons was not less wise in the composition of his sermons, than in the selection of his subjects. In his sermons he adopted the best method for the constant instruction of his people. The gospel, as it was taught and preached by him, exhibits the most important and delightful objects, that can awaken the attention and interest and gratify the affections of rational beings. The subjects of divine truth agree with the perfections, purposes, affections, exertions and enjoyments of God, as they are shown by his

works and taught in his word. With these subjects before his mind and in his heart, a preacher, who composes his sermons, as he ought to do, in the choice of his object, subject and text, in the statement of his doctrine, in the heads and points of his argument and illustration and in the improvement and application of his discourse, will so study and compose his sermon, that it will be suited to awaken the attention, enlighten the perception, assist the memory, direct the reason, quicken the conscience, affect the heart and govern the whole conduct of his hearers. With such objects, subjects and sermons, as agree with the gospel, a wise preacher will use, in the arrangement of his paragraphs, in the construction of his sentences and in the expression of his sentiments, the best order and the best words.

In the composition of his sermons, Dr. Emmons had before his mind and in his heart the very objects, doctrines, duties, blessings, motives, effects and means, which agree with the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; and which also agree with his supreme agency in the creation, formation and government of his creatures and in the redemption of his chosen people. Having the true knowledge of God and constantly instructed by his word, spirit and providence, he understood all things

as they are revealed in the gospel. He planned and composed his sermons on the principles of scientific and systematick theology. By such a method, while he labored to teach his people, he enlightened and enlarged his own mind and animated and elevated his own spirit, by his constant progress in the knowledge and love of divine truth. By his incessant watchfulness and prayerfulness, he was able to adapt his instructions to the movements and aspects of divine providence and the ever changing circumstances and characters of his hearers. His discourses were so seasonable and appropriate, that they seemed to come from God, at the time they were most needed ; and in a manner, that was most judicious and powerful. He walked with God in the duties of his office ; and gave himself wholly to prayer and the ministry of the word. As he walked with God, he went before his people in his sentiments and affections, in his instructions and exertions. And so must every minister do ; or unwisely and wickedly follow his people, while they are left without a guide and guard ; or led by blind guides, to wander and stumble and perish.

By his own example and in his numerous sermons on the Christian ministry, with the account he has given of his studies and preaching in his Memoir of himself, he affords more and better in-

struction, on the office and duty of a minister of the gospel, than can be found in the works of all other authors, except the book of God. Let the character of a wise preacher, in the composition of his sermons, be fairly applied to Dr. Emmons; and it is believed, that he will be placed, among uninspired ministers of the gospel, without an equal and without a rival, by the instructive method which he adopted in his discourses; and by the wisdom, with which, in this respect, he still taught the people knowledge.

His spirit and manner, in the delivery of his sermons, agreed with the objects and subjects of his instructions. At home, it was his common practice to have but one subject and one text for the Sabbath. In the first part of the day, he stated, explained and proved the doctrine of his sermon, which was, so far, wholly written. In the afternoon he improved the subject, which he had illustrated in the morning, commonly with nothing written, but the simple statement of the inferences, observations, reflections and remarks, which he derived from the doctrine for practical purposes; and which flowed from his lips and from his heart, like rivers of living water from the fountain of life. His method gave him, in every discourse, the advantages of a sermon correctly written; and also the freedom and fire of

extemporaneous instructions. By his knowledge of God and his constant access to him, in the duties of retired devotion, his mind was filled with the pure light of divine truth and his heart was warmed with holy and devout affections; and his spirit, body and soul were brought into a most solemn and joyful subjection to the gospel of divine grace.

In the duties of publick worship, the attitude and movement of his body, every look and action, the sounds of his voice and the words of his mouth, were in the most unaffected and beautiful harmony with the simplicity, uniformity, variety and magnitude of the doctrines and duties, the objects and effects of divine truth. His voice, which was not deeply masculine, nor feebly feminine, comprised a surprising degree of power and beauty, when he preached to his own people; with whom he was not subject to the embarrassment and timidity, which he commonly felt in other places. His voice, at home, was so powerful and pleasant, that, in accordance with his objects and subjects, he gained every ear and every eye and stirred the conscience and pierced the heart of his hearers, Sabbath after Sabbath, from year to year, with increasing effect, for more than half a century.

When his spirit was roused by some special

object and interest among his people, or by any great movement in divine providence, whether it respected the State, the nation or the world, his earnest cries and the tingling tones of his voice, with the deep and holy pathos of his heart, smiting the ear and piercing the soul of every hearer, seemed to echo and vibrate through the parish for days and weeks. And the general appearance and conversation of the people showed, that they were sensible they had received a message from heaven, which must be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death to themselves and their children. No one, who has not heard Dr. Emmons preach to his own people, can form a true judgment of the spirit and power of his instructions and of the attention and effect, that were apparent and constant in his numerous and intelligent congregation. By the natural and pathetick delivery of his sermons, he early obtained the reverence and affection of his people. Nor has any man, in ancient or modern times, in any department of eloquence, produced greater and better effects on the same people, for so long a time, by the power of speech, than were produced by Dr. Emmons. He studied and labored to speak, in his publick discourses and private conversation, as he ought to speak. And he gained, to a surprising degree, this object of his desires and prayers.

Respecting the ordinances of divine appointment, both private and publick, sacred and civil, his sentiments were so faithful and scriptural, so peculiar and powerful, that it is impossible to describe the authority and influence, with which God was pleased to strengthen and honor him, while he watched and preached, with all his might, to keep pure and entire the worship and ordinances, which God has appointed in his word. On these subjects, he was a protestant; he was a Puritan; he was an independent Congregationalist; he was an anti-Catholic; he was an anti-Episcopalian; he was anti-Presbyterian; he was an anti-Consociationalist; he was an anti-Associationalist; he was an anti-Anabaptist; he was an anti-Methodist; he was an anti-Separatist; he was an anti-Sectarian; he was an anti-Anarchist; he was an anti-Fanatic; he was an anti-Mobocrat; he was an anti-Aristocrat; he was an anti-Democrat; *he was an anti-Pas.* He opposed Ecclesiastical and Political domination, dictation, device and craft, whatever the spirit, the object, the form, or name they might assume. He was opposed to whatever opposed the supreme majesty, government and agency of the only living and true God; or the name, honor and power of the Lord Jesus Christ in his offices of prophet, priest and king in Zion;

or the authority and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

He was opposed to Sabbath schools, on account of their interference with the obligations and privileges of parents and heads of families, in respect to their children and households; and also because they tend to prevent the instruction, which ought to be given by the pastors and teachers of the churches; for they are, in divine truth, the only publick, official and responsible instructors of the rising generation; and they have no right to leave this duty to other persons, who have no official authority, nor responsibility; and who are often destitute of such a knowledge of the gospel, as is peculiarly necessary for the religious teachers of children and youth. Besides, he believed that the profession of Christian unity, by which Sabbath Schools have been introduced and conducted for the instruction of children and youth, would serve to conceal, exclude and subvert the fundamental, essential and peculiar doctrines of the gospel. He was, especially, persuaded, that the permanent establishment of Sabbath schools is inconsistent with domestick instruction and government, which God requires and ordains in respect to families; and the pastoral relations and obligations of the ministers of the gospel to the children of their charge.

He opposed the use of musical instruments in the worship of God, as it is contrary to that worship, which he requires and approves; and which is to be performed in spirit and in truth. The unwise and impious conduct of religious assemblies, who pretend to worship God, while they use instruments, which hinder and oppose the rational exercise of the holy and devout affections, which ought to ascend to heaven from the hearts with the voices of the congregation, the Holy Spirit by the prophet, Amos, severely and justly condemns and rebukes, with an implied censure of David, when he speaks of his disobedient and apostate people in these words, "that chant to the sound of the viol and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David."

Whatever may have been tolerated under the Jewish dispensation, the Holy Spirit teaches and requires the only rational and spiritual performance of Psalmody, that is allowable under the more perfect ordinance of the Christian dispensation. The apostle says, "I will sing with the spirit; and I will sing with the understanding also." And to Christians he says, "Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Again he says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly

in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Dr. Emmons, in his sermon on Sacred Musick, truly and wisely declares his rational and Scriptural judgment on this subject in these words : " Since there is no precept of Christ, no example of the apostles, no dictate of reason and no sentiment of piety, which requires the introduction of musical instruments into divine worship under the gospel, it is devoutly to be wished, that they may be entirely and universally excluded from the house of God."

Respecting civil government, in his sentiments, instructions and practices, he was a Republican, on the principles of religion, liberty, order and law. He was no less zealous for order than liberty ; for law than freedom. He desired and labored to promote a scriptural and patriotick reformation in human society, by the faithful observance of the civil and religious institutions and ordinances of a Republican Commonwealth. But he hated, dreaded and opposed revolutionary and levelling opinions and visionary and fanatical excitements and measures, for the removal of injuries and offences. He knew, that such measures and excitements produce disorder and confusion, anarchy and tyranny, violence and blood.

As he meant to fear God and regard man, with impartiality and independence; and would never renounce rational and scriptural principles for the objects of a party, or the subtle devices of a faction, he was, in respect to the political institutions and interests of the United States, a Washingtonian Federalist. And he was a consistent and powerful opponent of Jefferson and his anti-federal administration and anti-Christian influence.

He was a patriotick and evangelical Emancipationist; and he could not and would not become a partizan and subject himself to a faction, even under the profession of liberty and for the removal of slavery, against the general interests of the United States and the principles and requirements of the gospel. He ardently desired and labored to promote the principles and enjoyments of religious and civil freedom through the earth. Respecting individuals, families, churches, towns and schools, states and nations, he was a true and faithful servant of God and man. In the spirit of enlightened piety, patriotism and philanthropy, he prayed and taught, he lived and preached, so as to favor and promote peace with truth, order with liberty, justice with compassion, government with religion, the righteous punishment of transgressors with the tenderest human-

ity, salvation with holiness and the soundest orthodoxy with scriptural liberality. In the spirit and power of his office, he stood for God and his truth in his most wise and holy ordinances, against the floods of error and delusion, wickedness and disorder, which have so long and so greatly prevailed ; and which yet prevail and abound in families, churches, schools, towns, states and nations, over this land and over the earth. On no other subject were his sentiments instructions and exertions more important and benevolent, more patriotick and beneficial than on the ordinances of divine appointment.

In the instruction of students in theology, of whom he had a large number, he excelled every teacher of whom I have ever had any knowledge, in any department of education, whether literary, scientifick, or professional.

It would be a reproach to his personal acquaintance, it would be an offence in the presence of his church and people to make any attempt to show that the wisdom of his conduct, both publick and private, agreed with the wisdom of his sentiments and sermons. He spoke, as he ought to speak ; and he acted as he spoke, “walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” They, who were not of his people, must have seen him, in the presence and

house of God, with his own people ; they must have heard his voice in his prayers and preaching ; and have seen his tears, from week to week, from month to month, year after year, from his early days even to old age ; in order to know with what resolution, with what perseverance, with what fidelity, with what watchfulness, with what tenderness, with what boldness, with what meekness, with what patience, with what zeal and with what love, this wise preacher still taught the people knowledge. His whole conduct was a most impressive illustration of the dignity and beauty, with which eminent knowledge, goodness and wisdom ennoble and adorn a teacher and preacher of divine truth.

Nor have the effects of his ministry been different from what might have been expected, from the wisdom of his instructions and conduct. By his influence with his people, he retained their esteem, affection and confidence, in the uncommon changes and trials of his day, to such a degree, as has been, in the same time, entirely unexemplified in respect to other ministers and their people. What other church and people, in the same time, were so constant, punctual, joyful and solemn in the publick worship of God, as the church and people in this town ? What other church has maintained, so watchfully and

faithfully, yet so tenderly and powerfully, the discipline of the gospel, as this church has done under his ministry? What families have been instructed, restrained and governed, so far as his eye and voice and heart could reach, with more power and greater kindness than the families in this town, while he was their watchman? What minister has shown more concern for the needy and the tempted, the sick and dying, or greater sympathy with the afflicted and bereaved, with mourners and sufferers, or by more faithful and tender instruction and with better effect than was shown by Dr. Emmons? And have not this church and people seen and felt the great and happy effects of his labors, in their temporal and spiritual interests and enjoyments, in their seasons of adversity and prosperity?

Yet, it has been pretended, that the sentiments of Dr. Emmons and his manner of instruction are not accompanied, by the influence of the Holy Spirit; and are not suited to promote revivals of religion and the conversion of sinners. But, in the year 1784, as soon as the evils of the war began to subside and the attention of the people was relieved from the burdens and terrors of that fearful conflict, he was honored and blessed by a powerful effusion of the Holy Spirit and a glorious revival of religion. Of this revival he

says in his Memoir, "It was, indeed, a glorious and solemn season. On the sabbath, at lectures and in conferences, the people in general were deeply affected. And though many had high exercises of mind and were extremely impressed with lively views of eternal realities; yet no disturbance, or irregularities occurred. Those, who entertained hopes of a saving change, never expressed any enthusiastick fervor, or zeal; but manifested a sensible, rational and scriptural joy in God and delight in religious duties." In February, 1794, began another revival of religion among his people. In the year 1809, his church and people were blessed with a third season of special and saving mercy. These seasons of peculiar refreshment from the presence of the Lord, through the almighty power and invincible energy of the Divine Spirit, greatly enlarged and strengthened the church under his care; endeared their pastor and teacher to the hearts of Christians and established his reputation and influence in the judgment of his people.

After the first general attention to religion under his ministry, until the close of his publick labors, in his church was no such declension, as commonly follows religious revivals, under the treatment, which convicted sinners, hopeful converts and Christian churches usually receive from

their pastors and teachers. Nor in his own personal piety and religious attainments, nor with his church and people in their attendance on publick worship and the private duties of religion, were such decay and negligence, as have generally existed, in former and later times, after seasons of peculiar refreshment from the divine presence. His object and method and spirit, in the instruction of his people, admitted and favored his constant advancement in the gospel ; and demanded and secured the increasing attention and progress of pious hearers in the knowledge, practice and enjoyment of divine truth ; while such hearers, as attempted to oppose and reject his sentiments, were obliged to maintain the most obstinate and watchful attention and exertions, in order to prevent their conversion and salvation, under the powerful and persuasive arguments and admonitions, by which he enlightened their minds and carried conviction to their consciences.

The great and happy effects of his ministry were not confined to his own people, though they were so evident and abundant in their intelligence, prosperity and unity, while he was their teacher. They have been seen and felt in the character and condition of thousands, who have been, in some manner, affected by his in-

structions ; and who had gone, before his death, to the joys of heaven, or to the woes of hell. Thousands and millions will be affected by his instructions, as they shall be extended, far and wide, in the future scenes of earth and time. And they will continue and increase, in their connections and consequences, through all ages, world without end.

The immediate and permanent influence of his ministry prove and show, that he was wise in the end which he pursued ; and in the means, which he used, in the duties of his office. And it may be truly and safely declared, that what the Holy Spirit recorded of the royal preacher in Israel may be applied, with propriety and emphasis, to Dr. Emmons ; “ *Because he was wise, he still taught the people knowledge.*”

For the wisdom, which was given him and which he showed in the constant instruction of his people, he may be truly called the wise Teacher and the Royal Preacher of New England. Can you, then, refuse to believe, can you forbear to confess, that no other church and people, either in your day, or in the days of our fathers, even in New England, have been so highly favored, in their spiritual privileges, as the church and people in this town, through the supreme and boundless mercy of God, by the ministry of NATHANAEL EMMONS ?

The account of his services and their privileges, in his ministry, is closed and sealed, by the will and act of God, for the judgment of the great day. He died, at 3 o'clock, on the morning of Wednesday, the 23d of September, A.D., 1840, sixty-seven years and five months from his ordination to the pastoral office, seventy-one years from the time he began to preach the gospel, seventy-three years from the time he received the Baccalaureate ; and ninety-five years, four months and twenty-three days from his birth.

He lived to consign to the grave every person, who was a member of the church, when he became the minister of this parish ; every member of his first and pleasant family ; one half of his children by his second wife, two beloved daughters and a worthy son ; and also their most excellent mother, a faithful, kind and wise lady. But who can describe the characters, or mention the ages, or call the names of the multitudes, who have gone before him, from the people of his charge, into eternity ? — He leaves in his house his third wife ; and she, this day, commits to the grave her third husband, whom she has served and honored in the gospel, as she did her other husbands, who were faithful ministers of divine truth. To this worthy lady, who still lives, too much esteem and affection can not be shown by

the children and friends of Dr. Emmons, for the important and efficient services she performed and the trials she patiently and meekly endured, while she was a member of his family.

The surviving children and grand-children can find in God and in no other being the light and comfort, which they need in this time of darkness and sorrow. Their darkness and sorrow on earth will be, but for a moment. The light, joy and glory of their revered and beloved father will continue and increase in heaven forever. Often has he spoken, with humility and submission, yet with hope, comfort and confidence, of his own death and of his admission into the presence and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. At one time, some years before his death, when visited by sickness, which he thought would finish his course, he said, "If any should ask how I am in the state of my mind, you may say I am comfortable." Under the same circumstances he said, "If I should be permitted to enter heaven, I think I shall be very happy there; and I can say, if I shall not enter heaven, I shall be greatly disappointed." When it was mentioned to him, in January, 1838, that the time of his death could not be far distant, he replied in a manner, that was perfectly characteristick, "I am ready." Increasing humility and gratitude, in view of his

conduct towards God and of the conduct of God towards him, were very constant and prevalent the last years and months of his life ; and afforded the most decisive and delightful evidence of his preparation for a triumphant entrance, through the power and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, into the mansions of eternal purity and glory. Near the close of his life and in prospect of death, he said, " I am astonished at what God has done by me and for me ; and I think no other person on earth has so much reason, as I have, to be thankful to him." In his Memoir he closes the account of his religious character and conduct with the following sentence : " I know the time of my departure is at hand ; and I think I can say with some sincerity, I have fought a good fight, I have nearly finished my course, *I have kept the faith* ; and cherish a comfortable hope, that I shall finally receive that crown of righteousness, which awaits all the faithful ministers and followers of Christ." As able, faithful and wise, as was Dr. Emmons in the duties of his office, he was no less eminent for piety, patriotism and philanthropy. Respecting his character, the declaration of Tristram Burges, one of the most acute and perfect judges of human conduct, is not extravagant : " With Dr. Emmons I was personally acquainted. His excellence as a dis-

tinguished preacher of the gospel is known and acknowledged universally. In this eminent department, I, many years ago, knew and admired him. Before that time, he had become endeared to me by another kind of excellence. Though a stranger to him and not then residing in his parish, "I was sick, and he visited me." To know him as he really was, you must have met him by the bed of pain, prostration and anxiety. Here I first saw him; and such was his discourse, so pious, so parental, so consoling, that it never has and I think never will be forgotten by me. For at this moment, he lives in my memory as he then sat by my bedside, the very image, as it seemed to me, of his great and gracious Master.

"My dear Sir, should you write the biography of this good man, say, if you please, that, among divines, he was the greatest; but you cannot forget to say, that, among Christians, he was the best."

"The fathers! where are they? And the prophets! do they live forever?" How soon must every teacher and preacher of divine truth give an account, not of himself only, but of the souls of his people, to Him, who died on the cross, that sinners might live? The ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ must also give an account to Him, for the glorious gospel of his grace, which is

most solemnly and fearfully committed to their charge.

God has taught and shown us, by the example of the patriarchs and prophets, of the apostles and martyrs, of the Protestants and Puritans and by a wonderful succession of pious and faithful pastors and teachers in the New England towns and churches, the duty and safety, the wisdom and honor of official faithfulness, boldness and zeal in his servants, whom he calls and appoints to instruct and guide his people, through the temptations and dangers of this life to his kingdom and glory in heaven. But they, who have known the conduct and enjoyed the instructions of Dr. Emmons, have been most highly favored and exalted in the privileges and obligations of their sacred employment. And do they not know, that the churches and colleges, the theological institutions and benevolent associations, through the land, ought to be taught and shown how and why he preached the gospel, how and why he studied his sermons, how and why he instructed his students in theology, how he lived and how he died? — In view of his instructions and example will they not be exceedingly unfaithful and ungrateful, if they do not use the means, which God puts into their hands to teach and show ministers and magistrates, individuals and fami-

lies, churches and towns, states and nations, the duties, which they owe to their Creator, their fellow-creatures and themselves, as well as the doctrines, which they ought to believe, profess and maintain? Who are under stronger and more tender bonds to unite their desires and prayers, their counsels and exertions for these important and benevolent purposes than the ministers and churches of New England and of these United States? — Who can question the ability or integrity of that wise teacher and faithful preacher, by whom they have been so long helped and blessed in their duties and trials? Was he not soundly and discreetly orthodox and rational in his sentiments? — Was he not truly and kindly liberal in his spirit and conduct? — Was he not spiritual and scriptural in his affections and devotions?

Let Christian ministers of every name and order do what they ought to do to show the real character of Dr. Emmons; and there is reason to hope and believe, that they will become more and more of one heart and of one mind, in scriptural and rational Piety, Patriotism and Philanthropy. If Christian ministers, who are bound, by special bonds, to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth, will do and know their duty, magistrates and citizens, Christians and men will

be taught to “render to Cæsar the things, that are Cæsar’s; and to God the things, that are God’s;” and then truth and peace shall abide and prevail in our land and carry liberty with order and holiness with salvation and happiness unto all nations.

The glory of God, the honor of Jesus Christ and the progress of his kingdom in the earth, the comfort and strength of Christians and the repentance and salvation of sinners require and bind the preachers of the gospel to teach and preach every duty and every doctrine of divine truth. And they have every possible inducement and encouragement to do their whole duty. Nothing, but slothfulness and selfishness, nothing but the fear and favor of man, can induce us to misunderstand, contradict, or conceal one whit of what God teaches in the Bible. If we regard our present interests, if we regard the smiles and frowns of men; how much more ought we to regard the eternal interests of our hearers? — how ought we to fear the frowns and seek the smiles of God?

If we, who profess to be teachers and preachers of the gospel, do not preach the whole truth, what we omit will arise against us and condemn us. What truth we may preach, if we shun to declare the whole counsel of God, will not be to

our honor and praise. For it will be evident, that we do not preach any truth, for the truth's sake ; but for our own sake. If we love and preach the truth, for its own sake ; for its power, goodness and beauty ; we shall know and preach whatever we can learn from the works and word of God, by his Spirit and providence. It is more easy, pleasant and useful to know and declare the whole truth, as it is taught in the gospel, than it is to be defective and partial in our instructions. When we wisely know and fully and plainly preach the whole truth, it will assist and strengthen us in every duty ; and no one can gainsay, or resist us with success. But, if we refuse, or neglect to know and teach any doctrine, or duty, we turn what we pretend to teach, as well as what we omit, against ourselves ; and we provoke God to weaken and confound us. In the faithful performance of our official duties, we have no evil to fear ; but may be assured of present help, comfort and triumph from God, with the assistance and approbation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the powerful and gracious presence of the Holy Spirit. But, in the neglect of our duty, we have no reason to hope for any real good, either from man, or God ; either on earth or in heaven.

But what we may suffer, or enjoy, is of little

account, when compared with the truth and honor of the Lord Jesus Christ in the gospel and our duty to him and his saints. His name, which is above every name on earth and in heaven, should fill us with reverence and confidence in his service and make us valiant for his truth and bold as a lion, in our duty.

Through ignorance and prejudice, or by unfaithfulness and cowardice, or craftiness and deceitfulness; or that we may go with the multitude of false and faithless teachers and preachers, or attempt to maintain the interests and errors of a party and a sect; we may neglect and refuse to preach the truth, as it has been taught by Edwards, Bellamy, Hopkins, and Emmons; by John Smalley, Edwards, Junior, Stephen West, Samuel Spring and Nathan Strong. What is far worse, more false and hateful, more hurtful and shameful, we may refuse to know and teach, publicly and from house to house, what God teaches by Moses and the prophets, by the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles; and by such unwise and guilty conduct we may weaken and distress the children of God and embolden the wicked in sin and folly. And we may attempt to excuse and justify our conduct, in the rejection of the pure and sound doctrines of divine truth, as they are taught by the faithful and wise servants of God.

What, though the imperfections of the best men may seem to allow us some pretence, for our refusal to follow their example ; yet ought we not to turn their imperfections, as well as their faithfulness, to our own profit ; and make greater progress, in knowledge, goodness and wisdom for the instruction and salvation of our hearers, than they attained in their day ? Advancement and not declension is our duty ; and we are placed under special obligations and the most favorable and desirable advantages for constant progress and abundant success in the ministry of the gospel.

What, if there be no human teacher, to whom you can look for instruction, with unshaken confidence ? What, if there be no human example, which you can safely follow amidst the errors and offences, the delusions and temptations, which surround us at all times and in every place ? — There is a teacher and preacher, who is wiser than Solomon, — bolder than Elijah, more honest than Samuel, stronger than Sampson, more innocent than Daniel, more faithful than Moses. He is more constant than James, more zealous than Peter, more beloved than John, more holy and more successful than Paul. His instructions are perfect and glorious. His example is blameless and beautiful. His instructions

we are bound to believe and obey in every sentiment, affection and action. His example we are bound to know, love, revere and follow, at the loss of earthly things; at the expense of life itself.

Before him we must soon appear to render the account of our ministry; and to receive his sentence of approbation or condemnation for eternity. What sentence will be the most pleasant to our ears and our hearts, on the day of our death? and "in the judgment of the great day?" "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord:" Or, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth?"

There are great and special reasons and motives, which urge and bind us, at this day, to be watchful, faithful, patient, constant and bold in the fear and service of God and in the love and duty we owe to man. Wonderful and glorious, yet terrible, are the present movements and aspects of divine providence towards the apostate kingdoms and churches of Christendom. Babylon must fall, Jerusalem arise, Satan be bound, the nations, that do not repent, will soon be destroyed from the earth and "the kingdom and dominion and

the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven be given to the people of the saints of the most High." The Lord Jesus Christ now says to us, with peculiar emphasis, what he said to every hearer, when he was on earth; — *Watch!* — From his throne in heaven he speaks; and by his word and spirit and providence, he now warns every hearer, saying, "*Behold! I come as a thief!*" Blessed is he, that watcheth and keepeth his garments; lest he walk naked; and they see his shame." But who will be safe, if the watchmen slumber? Who will stand "in the battle of the great day of God Almighty," if the guides and guards, who should lead and keep his children, refuse to protect and defend themselves by the whole armor of God and be polluted by the unclean Spirits and join the hosts of Hell, against the truth and justice and mercy of God and the Lord Jesus Christ?

Ye ministers of the gospel! be entreated and persuaded, by the tender mercies and righteous vengeance of our Heavenly Father and Holy Sovereign; by the cross and the crown of the Divine and almighty Redeemer; and by the power and grace of the Eternal and most Holy Spirit; by the errors and woes of this guilty and troubled earth; by the imperfections and tribulations of real Christians; by "the gall of bitter-

ness and bond of iniquity," which hold sinners under the wrath of God and curse of his law ; by the torments and shame of hell ; and by the joys and glories of heaven ; — to regard your office, your people, the church of God and God himself, in the spirit and practice of the ever growing knowledge, goodness and wisdom, which will enable and embolden you to teach and preach, constantly, fully and clearly, the true knowledge of God and man, publicly and from house to house. So may you have the esteem and affection of every man, whose judgment and friendship are not a reproach and injury ; — so you will receive the powerful and gracious presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and the patience, comfort and strength of the Divine Spirit, in your labors and cares, in your infirmities and temptations ; while you live and when you die ; be approved and blessed at the final judgment ; and be honored and rewarded in heaven for ever and ever.

But who, more than he, who now speaks to you, can need, or more heartily and humbly request the countenance and assistance of God and man ? — For on whom do the instructions and admonitions of God, by the life and death of Dr. Emmons, fall with more weight than on him, whom he requested, more than twenty years before his death, to preach on this present occasion ;

and who has enjoyed his constant friendship almost forty years? — Well may I exclaim, though unworthy so to speak, *“My father! my father! the chariot and the horsemen of Israel!”*

When such a guide and guard is taken from our head, Who will not cry, *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?*

He lives, he reigns forever. From his throne he says — *My counsel shall stand; and I will do all my pleasure.*

Though we submit and rejoice, while we fear and tremble before Him; yet, who will not ask, *Where is my Lord and my God? — who was dead and is alive and lives for ever.*

He answers — *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Therefore, go ye and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Now unto Him, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all, that we ask, or think, according to the power, that worketh in us; unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

Amen and Amen.

PROVIDENCE, 29 Nov., 1849.





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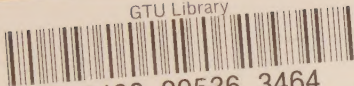
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